



Motivations of Chinese Rising Middle-Class Consumers to Purchase Food Online

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Declaration of Academic Authenticity

I hereby declare that I have independently written this paper with the title *Motivations of Chinese Rising Middle-Class Consumers to Purchase Food Online*. I declare that I have not used any sources other than those specified. All segments which were taken from sources either verbatim or by analogy (including paraphrasing), I have identified and referenced as such. I understand that failure to do so could lead to (and, possibly, even at some future point) legal and / or disciplinary action being taken.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'C' followed by a horizontal line and a small loop.

St. Gallen, August 31st, 2018, Charlène Max

Management Summary

The explosive growth in Internet use in China is changing its economy and society, particularly when it comes to online consumption in the food industry. On one side stand three of the most Chinese innovative companies, Alibaba, Tencent and JD.com. The e-commerce giants all possess their own websites and applications for online grocery shopping and meal delivery services, combined with the latest innovations in terms of technology usage and logistics systems. On the other side one finds the Chinese consumers, driven by the power and behavior of the rising middle-class. They benefit from high purchasing-power and want to consume high-quality products while having less time to invest in grocery shopping than the previous generation.

The literature provides relevant theories regarding the study of online consumer behavior and its specific characteristics. Furthermore, some researchers focused their investigation on Chinese consumers. Besides, with the emergence of online commerce, the literature on online shopping motivation has started to grow. However, it has failed to describe the very specific motivations of Chinese online consumers in the food sector. To this aim, this study uses a research framework of online shopping motivations based on the existing literature. The research design comprises secondary and primary research. Secondary sources enable one to gather information about the latest market trends. Primary sources provide insights emerging from six qualitative in-depth interviews with Chinese consumers living in Shanghai. Deductive coding was used to analyze the interviews. To achieve this, two coding cycles have been completed. In the end, the codes were grouped into themes, utilitarian and hedonic motivations.

The findings suggest that Chinese rising middle-class consumers are more driven by utilitarian motives than hedonic ones when buying food online. Because they shop with their mobiles, they cherish the “Convenience” and “Time Saving” benefits of online food shopping. Furthermore, online shopping allows them to buy safe products of a higher quality because they can rely on the ratings and reviews of other consumers. This motivation is called “Security”. Moreover, in the online marketplace, Chinese consumers benefit from a wider selection of products. Also, because the adoption rate of smartphones is so high in Shanghai, the consumers just do not see any reason why they would not use their mobile to purchase food. This motive refers to “Lifestyle”.

The findings having highlighted a new theory, a framework of online shopping motivations is suggested in this study. It encompasses three motives that were not present in the basic framework, “Security”, “Lifestyle”, and “Time Saving”, and leaves out three that were not expressed by the Chinese consumers, “Lack of Sociality”, “Adventure/Exploration”, and “Idea”. Furthermore, it provides recommendations for Swiss companies willing to sell products in the Chinese online food market.

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List of Abbreviations

BCG	Boston Consulting Group
CNNIC	China Internet Network Information Center
FMCG	Fast-Moving Consumer Goods
O2O	Online to Offline
PwC	PricewaterhouseCoopers

1. Introduction

From Emerging to Leading-Edge Consumers

On 22nd December 2017, Migros, one of the biggest grocery stores in Switzerland, announced the launch of its products on the online marketplace in China. The Swiss company started a collaboration with Tmall, a platform owned by one of China's biggest e-commerce firms, Alibaba Group, to make its items available for Chinese consumers. By expanding its activities in China, Walter Huber, responsible for the M-Industrie Group, declared targeting a market potential of 488 million consumers (Le Temps, 2017). Alibaba Group, as well as Tencent and JD.com, are some of the leading innovative firms in China, the biggest e-commerce market in the world with revenue generated through online sales expected to reach 584 billion dollars in 2018 (Statista, 2018). According to Yu (2014), the Internet has become "the center of China's consumer revolution" (p. 59).

The explosive growth in Internet use is changing China's economy and society, particularly when it comes to online consumption in the food industry. On one side stand the three innovative companies, Alibaba, Tencent, and JD.com. The e-commerce giants all possess their own websites and applications for online grocery shopping and meal delivery services, combined with the latest innovations in terms of technology usage and logistics systems. Tmall and JD.com alone respectively hold 58% and 24% of the Chinese online grocery market (Credit Suisse AG, 2018, p. 45). When it comes to meal delivery services, two apps, Meituan Waimai, owned by Tencent, and Ele.me, valued at 9.5 billion dollars and acquired by Alibaba in 2018, respectively represent 45% and 36% market shares (Credit Suisse AG, 2018, p. 42). Alone during the last quarter of 2017, the Chinese meal delivery market reached a value of 10.7 billion dollars (Alizila, 2018).

On the other side remain the Chinese consumers, driven by the power and behavior of the rising middle-class. They benefit from high purchasing-power and want to consume high-quality products while having less time to invest in grocery shopping than the previous generation. According to the National Bureau of Statistics of China (n.d.), in 2016, the country counted 776 million workers. The average per capita income was 23,800 yuan in 2016 while it was only 18,300 yuan three years before. In 2016, it even reached 33,600 yuan for inhabitants of urban areas, following an income increase of around 8% compared to the previous year. Furthermore, according to the same office, the population aged

between 15 and 64 years old reached 1 billion people in 2016. In the same year, the young population aged between 0 and 14 years old represented 230,000,000 citizens and China experienced a natural growth rate of 5.86%.

Online meal delivery and grocery shopping started to explode in popularity some years ago. Hungry and busy Chinese customers enjoy ordering food from their mobile, benefitting from ultra-quick delivery services. Chinese food but also all kinds of specialties present on the streets are also available on the web. This is not only the case for storable items but also for fresh food (China Daily, 2018). In Shanghai, no matter if it be fruit, vegetables, dairy products, meat, or fish... most of the orders completed online can be delivered at a customer's door in less than a day (Alizila, 2015). However, ordering food online means buying it virtually, without seeing, smelling or touching it. In a country that suffered many food scandals in the past years, concerns about origin, quality, authenticity, and freshness of the groceries remain at the center of the preoccupations of Chinese eaters. Nevertheless, online grocery and food delivery markets are still on the rise. So, what other aspects drive Chinese consumers to order food online? What exactly are their motivations? Why would they choose this way of purchasing food instead of going to a store and personally selecting the products they prefer, the fruit that seems to be ripe, and the fish that looks fresh? Yet the answers to these questions are of primary importance for any foreign concern willing to enter the big online food market in China. Understanding the needs and motivations of its customers is the starting point of any company's successful strategy.

Research Question and Objectives and Domain Limitation

The purpose of this study is to gain a deep understanding of the motivations of Chinese consumers in the food sector and to emit recommendations for Swiss companies willing to enter this market. Accordingly, the research question is stated as follows: What are the motivations of rising middle-class Chinese consumers to purchase food online?

Consequently, this study aims to achieve three objectives:

- To determine the shopping motivations of Chinese online consumers in the food sector

- To define the success factors for an online seller of food to satisfy Chinese online buyers
- To suggest recommendations for Swiss companies active in the food industry and willing to satisfy Chinese online clients

This study is rooted in the consumer behavior academic field. More precisely, it tends to deepen the actual existing academic knowledge regarding online shopping motivations of Chinese consumers. The focus of this research is set on the behavior of the growing Chinese middle-class. It does not focus on low-revenue individuals or the wealthiest elite, who distinguish themselves from the middle-class in terms of needs and consumption. Furthermore, it is based on the citizens of one of China's biggest cities Shanghai, where the revenue level is higher than in the rest of the Mainland and where the middle-class population is the biggest. Since they are living in an urban area, it suggests that the consumers of this study have equal access to shopping malls and e-commerce websites thanks to their mobile phone possession and internet network. Finally, this study focuses on their motivations for buying food online. Food comprises groceries as well as ready-made meals. It does not aim to study the motivations for online shopping in other industries. To conclude, this research will participate in the expansion of academic knowledge in the field and help foreign companies to appeal to the unique Chinese buyer in the online food marketplace.

Structure of this Paper

To become familiar with the field of this research, the next chapter will provide a review of the literature that currently exists regarding consumer behavior, Chinese consumers, and motivations to shop online. After the research gap has been established, chapter 3, methodology, will explain how this study will be executed. Particularly, a research framework based on the preceding literature will be presented. The findings of the research will be detailed in chapter 4. Finally, the last part of this paper will discuss the results, mention the limitations of the study, present recommendations for Swiss companies and suggest directions for future research. Each of the sources cited in this paper is provided in the bibliography, followed by the essential appendices.

2. Literature Review

This chapter provides an overview of the existing literature in relation to different topics of this study. First, a broad definition of the consumer and how his/her behavior is influenced by some stimuli is provided. It is completed by an explanation of the specific patterns of a buyer when shopping in the online marketplace. Particularly, specific factors having an impact on the online consumer behavior are presented. The literature review of this first part tackles the specificities of the buyer from a very general point of view, independently of his/her origin. However, this study focuses on the motivations of Chinese buyers. Therefore, the second part of this chapter will have a closer look at specific patterns of Chinese consumers as described in the literature. Finally, the focus is set on the very specific topic of this research, online shopping motivations. At the end of this section, the research gap is clearly defined.

2.1. Online Consumer Behavior

2.1.1. Fundamentals of the Consumer Behavior

Research on consumer behavior started in the 1960s with the explosion of consumption and the need for marketers to understand and analyze how individuals and households spent their budgets (Close, 2012). At that time numerous researchers began to concentrate their study on understanding the consumer or buyer behavior and its impact on marketing and advertising strategies (Close, 2012). They aimed at producing universal theories and decision models, while some associations for consumer research were created. Nowadays, modern marketers agree on the fact that research on consumer behavior covers “the study of the process involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy needs and desires” (Solomon, 2015, p. 28). According to Solomon (2015, p. 29), a consumer can be defined as “a person who identifies a need or desire, makes a purchase, and then disposes of the product during the three stages of the consumption process”. In his view, the three mentioned stages include pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase issues. Schiffman and Wisenblit (2015) define the customer going through a similar process to the one described by Solomon. In their model, the first stage, input stage, involves marketing stimuli of a firm, more precisely product promotion, price, distribution, and

advertisement, as well as the social environment of the customer. In their view, the customer is significantly influenced by reference groups, family, and social class, and by the advice and recommendations he receives from these groups of persons. The second phase, process stage, combines all factors that come to place when the buyer makes a decision. According to the authors, psychological influences, meaning needs and motivation, personality traits, perception, and attitudes, affect the buying process. After having been through the process, the customer enters the last phase, the output stage. There, he chooses whether to buy the good or not, evaluates the purchase if he did it, and elects if he wants to repeat it, or, in other words, if he trusts the brand and wants to become a loyal customer. According to Armstrong and Kotler (2018, p. 158), consumer buyer behavior relates to “the buying behavior of final consumers – individuals and households that buy goods and services for personal consumption”. Similarly, they argue that different aspects come into play when a buyer must take a decision and therefore suggest a universal Model of Buyer Behavior. As shown in Figure 1, three important components have an influence on the final buyer decision: the environment, the buyer’s black box and the buyer responses (Armstrong and Kotler, 2018).

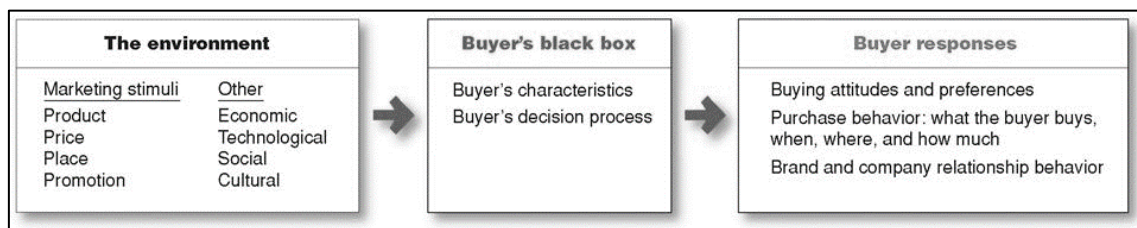


Figure 1: Model of Buyer Behavior (Armstrong and Kotler, 2018)

Particularly relevant for this study is the “buyer’s black box”. This stage tends to understand the “why” of the buyer final decision (Armstrong and Kotler, 2018). It includes the buyer’s characteristics and the buyer’s decision process. Buyer’s characteristics depend on cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors. According to Armstrong and Kotler (2018, p. 159), “culture is the most basic cause of a person’s wants and behavior”. The culture englobes the basic values, perceptions, and behavior a person has learned by growing up in a society, such as within a country. According to Schiffman and Wisenblit (2015, p. 296), culture is “an invisible hand that guides the actions of people of a particular society”. Culture itself contains smaller subcultures, such

as religions, racial groups, geographic regions or social classes (i.e., middle-class consumers) where individuals belong to a specific rank with similar values and interests (Armstrong and Kotler, 2018). The food sector is a good example of standards affected by culture, as shown by Armstrong and Kotler (2018, p. 297) with the case of American food habits,

“ [...] culture provides standards about when to eat (“not between meals”); where to eat (“most likely, the restaurant is busy because the food is good”); what is appropriate to eat for breakfast (pancakes), lunch (a sandwich), dinner (“something good and healthy”), and snacks (“something with quick energy, but not too many calories”); and what to serve to guests at a dinner party (“a formal sit-down meal”), at a picnic (barbecued “franks and burgers”), or at a wedding (champagne)”.

Psychological factors include motivation, perception, learning, and beliefs and attitudes, all anchored in the mind of a person. Interesting to develop regarding the topic of this study is the definition of motivation. Motivation is driven by needs, which are according to Schiffman and Wisemblit (2015, p. 82), “circumstances or things that are wanted or required, and they direct the motivational forces”. Solomon (2015, p. 39) defines motivation as “the process that leads people to behave as they do. It occurs when a need is aroused that the consumer wishes to satisfy. The need creates a state of tension that drives the consumer to attempt to reduce or eliminate it”. Furthermore, motivation can whether originate from a specific inner classification of needs, as developed by the Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943), or be unconscious. According to Maslow (1943), people first aim to satisfy their physiological needs (hunger, thirst, air to breathe), before gradually moving to each of the next levels, which are safety and security, social (love, affection, acceptance), esteem (recognition, status), and finally self-actualization (enriching experiences) needs. Unconscious motivation is harder to recognize since it implies the consumer acts according to a stimulus that he or she is not even aware of.

2.1.2. Particularities of the Online Consumer

With the rapid expansion of the Internet and online businesses in the last 20 years, research on consumer behavior paraded into the specific field of online consumer behavior (Yang, He, and Xuecheng, 2010; Close, 2012). Several authors have tended to identify the characteristics of online consumer behavior, described as a complex

phenomenon (Cheung, Chan, and Limayem, 2005; Darley, Blankson, and Luethge, 2010; Yang et al., 2010). According to Solomon (2015, p. 45), “digital revolution is one of the most significant influences on consumer behavior, and the impact of the Web will continue to expand as more and more people around the world log in”. Indeed, for a company selling products in the online marketplace, the priority is to understand how new technologies influence “the traditional assumptions underlying conventional theories and models” of consumer behavior (Becker, 2008, p. 1838). To cite Cheung et al. (2005, p. 2), there are “significant differences between off-line and online consumer behavior that warrant a distinguishing conceptualization”.

Online consumerism evolves in an ever-changing environment where economic and technological components play a major role. As Internet connection and e-commerce websites are developed, the numbers of shopping opportunities and online consumers both increase. Furthermore, compared to the traditional retail place, the online shopping area offers the possibility for the buyers to shop at any time and in any place (Degeratu, Rangaswamy, and Wu, 2000). With the increasing amount of research into the online consumer area, some authors have tried to review major findings and proposed integrated online consumer models. (Cheung et al., 2005; Darley et al., 2010). Particularly, the framework developed by Cheung et al. (2005) suggests a complex model that can be retained as a reference. The scholars reviewed online consumer research between 1994 and 2002 and came up with the suggestion of an integrated framework for the study of online consumer behavior, as shown in Figure 2 on the next page. According to this model, five major domains have an influence on the online buyer’s process, which itself comprises the three phases of intention, adoption, and continuance of shopping (Cheung et al., 2005). The areas “Environmental Influences” and “Product/Service Characteristics” can be interpreted as being similar to “The Environment” of the Model of Buyer Behavior by Armstrong and Kotler (2018). “Consumer Characteristics” is equal to the “Buyer’s Black Box” whereas “Medium Characteristics” and “Merchant and Intermediary Characteristics” are specific to the online context and do not appear in any other traditional consumer behavior models (Armstrong and Kotler, 2018; Cheung et al., 2005).

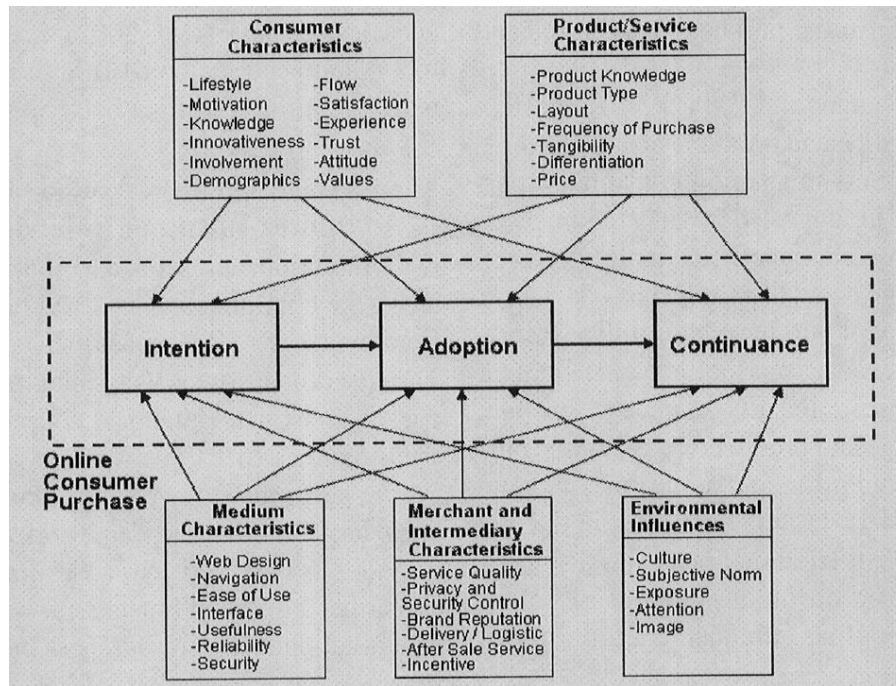


Figure 2: Framework of Online Consumer Behavior (Cheung et al., 2005)

Environmental Influences

According to the Framework of Online Consumer Behavior, environmental influences are concerned with culture, subjective norms, exposure, attention, and image. Online consumers belong to a specific subculture of all consumers since they are a fragment of a population that share the common characteristic of purchasing in the online market. The online Psychology Dictionary (2013) defines subjective norms as being “the norms which are followed by considering the other people in mind to make oneself acceptable for the people around him.”. Hence, it refers to an individual’s behavior that is exposed to social influences. In the online marketplace, these influences appear in the form of virtual communities (Solomon, 2015). Solomon (2015, p. 537) describes a community as “a unified body of individuals, unified by interests, location, occupation, common history, or political and economic concerns”. For Armstrong and Kotler (2018, p. 163), online communities also refer to online social networks, where “people socialize or exchange information and opinions”. They are represented in form of discussion groups, online forums, blogs, communal shopping sites, and social media (Armstrong and Kotler, 2018). Important virtual communities are often the ones created by social media. According to Solomon (2015, p. 47), social media are “the online means of communication,

conveyance, collaboration, and cultivation among interconnected and interdependent networks of people, communities, and organizations enhanced by technological capabilities and mobility”. Social media brought a culture of participation among its users, that is the possibility to freely communicate with other members of the community or organizations and to share content, opinions, reviews, ratings, pictures, and stories. In this sense, e-commerce platforms should provide an atmosphere that is similar to the one in the virtual communities (Chau, Cole, Massey, Montoya-Weiss, and O'Keefe, 2002). Yang et al. (2010) affirm that the information emerging from a customer's social network is an influence that should not be mislaid. Customers are extremely sensitive to information coming from personal sources (Tuncay Zayer and Coleman, 2012). In addition to social media, online shoppers are also highly influenced by users sharing product reviews, even if posted by people unknown to the buyer (Tuncay Zayer and Coleman, 2012). Items commented on with recommendations are ordered twice as often as the others (Tuncay Zayer and Coleman, 2012). In particular, customers reviews are very important in the case of “experience products” (Tuncay Zayer and Coleman, 2012). It means that these products cannot be investigated before being bought and that they are discovered when consumed, which is the case for food or beverages.

Product/Service Characteristics

In the Online Consumer Behavior model, product knowledge, product type, layout, frequency of purchase, tangibility, differentiation, and price, play a significant role in the Product/Service Characteristics area (Cheung et al., 2005). The Internet offers a lot of opportunities for consumers to look for product information (Yang et al., 2010). In general, it can be said that for online shoppers the effort during the decision process is reduced because they have access to a vast selection of products at the same time and can proceed to information screening and reliability, as well as product comparison (Alba et al., 1997; Park and Kim, 2003). This fast process and the fact that online consumers cannot touch the products emphasize the importance of information quality on an e-commerce platform (Park and Kim, 2003). According to Tuncay Zayer and Coleman (2012), consumers are increasingly engaging in extensive information searches, even for low-priced or low-risk products. Furthermore, Penn (2009) argues that online buyers are looking for information from online sources, such as blogs and review sites. Customers simply want to “make better purchase decisions” (Tuncay Zayer and Coleman, 2012, p.

238). For Jarvenpaa and Todd (1997), everything that encompasses the product can be defined as “merchandising”. It refers to product assortment, variety, information, price comparison, and product testimonials. For Yang et al. (2010), product/service characteristics correspond to price, quality and product type.

Consumer Characteristics

Lifestyle, motivation, knowledge, innovativeness, involvement, demographics, flow, satisfaction, experience, trust, attitude, and values are all key constructs that define Consumer Characteristics. This is also the conclusion of Yang et al. (2010, p. 2) who found out that “demographics, personality, lifestyle, and many other factors are all the research objectives in the area of consumer characteristics”. Generally, compared to online non-shoppers, online consumers are younger, wealthier, better educated, have a higher “computer literacy” and are bigger retail spenders (Allred, Smith, and Swinyard, 2006). They earn more and consequently benefit from higher purchasing power. There is a higher probability that they possess a device, such as a computer or a smartphone, with internet access and that consequently they intend to buy goods online (Tuncay Zayer and Coleman, 2012). Furthermore, online shoppers tend to belong to younger generations that are used to new technologies and Internet transactions (Armstrong and Kotler, 2018). The biggest users of e-commerce are *Millennials*, also called *Generation Y*, that is to say people born between 1977 and 2000 (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015; Armstrong and Kotler, 2018). They are the first generation that grew up with computers, mobile phones, and online social media. Hence, they are very comfortable with digital technology and use it as “a way of life” (Armstrong and Kotler, 2018). Born after 2000, *Generation Z*, also named *Digital Natives*, are young consumers who “blend the online and offline worlds seamlessly as they socialize and shop” (Armstrong and Kotler, 2018, p. 99).

Schiffman and Wisenblit (2015) defend the idea that if a company understands the emotional and transactional motives of its customers, it can detect what drives customer satisfaction (p. 42). After having reviewed the literature, Omar, Bathgate, and Nwankwo (2011) proposed six factors having an influence on customer satisfaction: convenience, product performance, consumer services, website sensory stimulation, website social interaction functions, and security concerns. Convenience suggests that the navigation is simple for the users, that they can easily understand product information, order, and pay, and that they benefit from safe and fast delivery. Product performance is concerned with

the quality, selection, price, and categories of products being sold. When it comes to consumer services, the contacts between seller and consumer are relevant, as are the clarity of being able to change products, return, and refund policies, and product arrival information. Website structure, colors, and design are part of the website sensory stimulation whereas forum and chatroom functions are comprised in website social interaction functions. Finally, security concerns deal with protection of privacy and security. A study by Anderson and Swaminatha (2011) revealed eleven determinants of customer satisfaction when shopping in the online marketplace. They can be classified into two categories, the emotion-based and the transaction-based determinants. Adaptation is when the customer feels unique and can buy personalized products. Interactivity enables the user to research information and compare products. Nurturing is about maintaining the relationship with the customer. The determinant “commitment” means that the shopper wants his/her order to be delivered on time. The network offers the possibility for a buyer to share his/her experience with the community. A wide selection of products should be offered. Transactional ease allows the user to navigate easily and quickly. Engagement provides an attractive, inviting, comfortable and enjoyable shopping experience. Loyalty implies the platform is the favorite shopping place of the buyer. Inertia makes it difficult in terms of time, money and effort for the buyer to switch to another merchant. Finally, trust makes the buyer feel that the seller is honest and reliable (Anderson and Swaminatha, 2011). When online buyers trust a website, they are more willing to become committed to the company (Park and Kim, 2003). This assumption is also validated by Flavian and Guinalieu (2006) and Omar et al. (2011) who suggest that an online buyer’s loyalty and intention to return to a website depend on the level of trust, which is in turn influenced by perceptions of privacy and security. According to Tuncay Zayer and Coleman (2012, pp. 242-243), if a website “fails to connect with the consumer on a personal level, consumers are more likely to search for products on other websites. Without the personal contact, trust becomes an issue”. Gaining trust from online users is then crucial to see them settle one or more purchases (Tuncay Zayer and Coleman, 2012). To conclude, the expectation-confirmation theory says that “if the perceived performance meets one’s expectation, confirmation is formed, and consumers are satisfied” (Yang et al., 2010, p. 272).

Medium Characteristics

Web design, navigation, ease of use, interface, usefulness, reliability, and security, are features that have a significant influence on the intention, adoption, and continuance of online shoppers. This assumption was also validated by Park and Kim (2003), who state that user interface quality and security perceptions affect information satisfaction, which in turn, significantly relates to site commitment and actual purchase behavior. According to the two authors, security is an important part that encompasses privacy and personal data protection. They also affirm that store layout, search engine, site map, and guidance functions, all together called “navigation and convenience”, have an impact on online consumer behavior. According to Tuncay Zayer and Coleman (2012), the construction and aesthetics of a platform are its most crucial elements of success. Furthermore, a website should permit users to shop in a reasonable amount of time (Tuncay Zayer and Coleman, 2012). For DeLone and McLean (1992), website appearance, which includes design, colors used, and navigation, has an impact on the interaction between the platform and the users. According to Park and Kim (2003, p.17), a “well-designed user interface system may reduce consumers’ cost of searching and the time required for information processing”. Moreover, a website reflecting high quality has more chances of engendering trust, and, consequently, the intention to purchase (Tuncay Zayer and Coleman, 2012).

In the United States of America, it seems that some differences exist in genders’ preferences. To cite Tuncay Zayer and Coleman (2012, p. 242), “males have been found to prefer a much more functional online environment where product information is easy to find, and the order process is quick and simple”. Furthermore, web design, navigation, ease of use, interface, usefulness, reliability, and security, are items that are not only perceived in a different way among genders but also among different cultures. The concept and study of culture emerged in the 20th century. Contributors have defined culture as “a system of values and norms that are shared among a group of people and when taken together constitute a design for living” (Hill, 2002), or “the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one category of people from another” (Hofstede, 1997). The first framework of intercultural differences was formulated by the anthropologist Hall (1976), who divided cultures into three dimensions: monochronic vs. polychronic cultures, high vs. low context cultures, and proxemics. His

theory was later completed by other authors coming from various backgrounds. Today, the main contributors to the study of cultural differences between various countries are Schwartz (1992), Lewis (1996), Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997), and Hofstede (1997). All aimed to categorize the population of a nation according to different cultural dimensions. Schwartz (1992), a social psychologist and Professor of psychology, tended to classify people according to their basic human values. He came up with seven Cultural Value Orientations: Harmony, Embeddedness, Hierarchy, Mastery, Affective Autonomy, Intellectual Autonomy, and Egalitarianism. According to his study, each nation can be categorized by one of these orientations. Lewis (1996), linguist, communication consultant, and writer, introduced a classification system based on three dimensions: linear-active (task-oriented), multi-active (relationship-oriented) and reactive (respect-oriented). Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997) used seven dimensions to understand a culture: universalism vs. particularism, individualism vs. collectivism, neutral vs. emotional, specific vs. diffuse, achievement vs. ascription, sequential vs. synchronic, and internal vs. external control. Finally, the most known structure to position cultures remains the one suggested by Hofstede, first published in the 1970s and later completed in 1997. He based his theory on six cultural dimensions: individualism vs. collectivism, low vs. high power distance, masculinity vs. femininity, low vs. high uncertainty avoidance, long-term vs. short-term orientation, and indulgence vs. restraint. Research on cultures showed the importance for international players to adapt their behavior, management practices, communication style or marketing strategy to the specific culture they are interacting with (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015). Based on this assumption, a new field of research emerged in the information technology domain in the 1990s. Researchers started to analyze the impact of cultural differences on internet usage and web design preferences. Studies have shown the importance of customizing the interface to make the user “feel at home” (Winograd, 1997) so that he “will not be offended or confused by the interface” (Russo and Boor, 1993). To improve the interface, companies or web designers should have extended knowledge of individual psychology and social communication (Winograd, 1997). This knowledge should allow them to offer design and content that fit the user in terms of colors, spatial organization, fonts, shapes, icons and metaphors, language, flags or sounds (Barber and Badre, 1998). According to Hillier (2003, p. 11), “when we produce a website in a given language, we should also ensure that the website conforms to the norms of the culture in which that language is based”. What is called “user-friendly” does not only consider basic requirements such as

efficacy, usability and safety but also the cultural context (Barber and Badre, 1998 ; Rimondi, 2015) because the way a user navigates and interacts, uses mental models and sees appearance is affected by his/her culture (Rimondi, 2015).

Merchant and Intermediary Characteristics

Merchant and Intermediary Characteristics are concerned with service quality, privacy and security control, brand reputation, delivery/logistic, after sale service, and incentive. Mixing some of these attributes with medium characteristics, Yang et al. (2010, p. 271) agree that “interface design, security control, service quality control, and business process controls are the main factors influencing” the process of intention to adoption of purchase. After-sales service or customer service implies that a website provides useful information and answers to customers’ specific questions regarding relevant topics such as payment policies or shipping costs (Park and Kim, 2003). Regarding the shipping process, online buyers want to know the delivery pricing guides, guarantees, and schedules before placing an order (Page-Thomas, Moss, Chelly, and Yabin, 2006).

2.2. Chinese Middle-Class Consumers

2.2.1. Jiulinghou Generation

Because national markets differ in their levels of economic development, cultures, and customs, and buying patterns (Armstrong and Kotler, 2018, p. 145), the behavior of the customers of various nations differs. Furthermore, online behavior and consumer’s demographic, psychographic, attitudinal, and experiential factors are highly connected (Sin and Tse, 2002; Omar et al., 2011). Research on consumption and customer behavior started in the Western part of the world with the growing consumption habits and expenses in the developed economies in the 1960s (Close, 2012). However, Chinese customers grew up in a different environment compared to the Western economies. Indeed, the four environmental factors, that are economical, technological, social, and cultural patterns, have evolved in a drastic and unique manner in China in the last 20 years (Yu, 2014). Consumption has exploded from 1990 as the government adopted new policies to boost economic growth and consumption (Davis, 2000; Veeck and Burns, 2005). This event appeared at the same time as the extensive development of the Internet network. On this subject, Omar et al. (2011) confirm that “the more innovative a society

is the more likely the consumer is to use the Internet”. Indeed, there has been an exponential growth of e-commerce websites in China between 1990 and 2000 (Omar, Bathgate, and Nwankwo, 2011). Hence, Chinese consumers did not progress with the same buying behaviors as other developed countries, whether for offline or online shopping habits (Yu, 2014). Moreover, evolving in a fast-changing environment, China has imposed drastic transformations in the everyday life of the current Chinese generation compared to preceding. The new consumer generation, called the *Jiulinghou* generation (born in the 1990s) is the first that grew up with constant Internet access (Yu, 2014). They are the contemporaries of the *Millennials*, *Generation Y* or *Echo Boomers* of the Western World (Armstrong and Kotler, 2018). Generally, the new consumers have more spending power than their elders at the same age and are more individualistic, self-centered, lonely and materialistic than previous generations (Yu, 2014). They consume because they aspire to a better quality of life and more experiences. For them, consumption can be assimilated to escape and liberation (Yu, 2014). According to the report *Emerging Consumer Survey 2018* published by the Credit Suisse Research Institute, with their strong job security and robust income growth, young consumers place a greater focus on quality than on quantity (Credit Suisse AG, 2018).

According to the *Emerging Consumer Survey 2018*, in emerging countries technology is “more of a facilitator of growth rather than the disruptor we are seeing in developed markets.” (Credit Suisse AG, 2018, p. 38). Thus, Chinese people have a very different approach to e-commerce from those in the West. In developed countries, e-commerce is mainly used as an easier, faster and more convenient way than going to a store. By contrast, in China, e-commerce just provides a richer way to shop. Consumers enjoy spending time in a “discovery-driven online world of energetic chaos where shopping is an adventure” (Boston Consulting Group, 2017). According to the Boston Consulting Group (2017), in China online shopping is viewed as a social experience, mixing entertainment and purchases. Instead of searching for specific items as Western consumers would do, Chinese buyers use e-commerce websites just as if they were at the mall with their relatives: they explore new trends. Moreover, Chinese users benefit from more advanced social media integration in the shopping process as they can use them to instantly buy an item they see right there. In the West, e-commerce platforms and social media still tend to be separated. Hence, Chinese consumers enjoy a more integrated purchasing decision process with information available across all information channels,

as well as online and offline. Boston Consulting Group (2017) also notes the tendency in China to offer more advanced e-commerce technology, which supports the growth of online businesses, while physical retail is less developed. This assumption was confirmed by the Research Institute of the Credit Suisse (2017) in its report titled *The Chinese Consumer in 2017*. According to the firm, retail space in China accounts for 39m² per 1000 people as opposed to 2000m² per 1000 people in North America (Credit Suisse AG, 2017, p. 17).

For Chinese consumers, the Internet is a way to enjoy the social and emotional experiences of consumption (Yu, 2014). However, Chinese consumers do not make a difference between the physical and online shopping worlds. For them, both real and virtual shopping spaces are relevant and make a buying experience complete (Yu, 2014). The Internet became “an integral part of the social and emotional experience of consumption” (Yu, 2014, p. 24). When looking at Chinese online users, it can be said that they are young since 60 percent of them were under thirty in 2012 (Yu, 2014). The netizens, a word emerging from the contraction of “net” and “citizen” (Yu, 2014) aged between 18 and 30 years old are the “driving force” of the Chinese online community (Omar et al., 2011). Furthermore, predictions say that the largest middle-class group in the world will be located in China in 2025 (Armstrong and Kotler, 2018). It will also certainly become the biggest consumer group of the country (Yu, 2014), expected to contribute to 35% of China’s total consumption in the next five years (Credit Suisse AG, 2017). There is not a universal definition of the “middle-class”, a word described differently by marketers and sociologists (Yu, 2014; Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015; Armstrong and Kotler, 2018). However, sociologists generally agree that middle-class consumers have “comfortable living standards, economic security, and the expertise they need to maintain their lifestyle” (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015, p. 286). They achieved a college education and are independent, non-conformist, and innovative. Middle-class citizens make extensive use of their mobile phones in their everyday life (Doctoroff, 2012). They take advantage of their device for payment, price comparisons, blogging, or finding and booking restaurants or taxis, to cite only a few ideas. In terms of frequency of use and variety of behavior, it has been found that Chinese middle-class consumers are way more advanced than Western users (Yu, 2014). Furthermore, despite the practical functions it allows, the mobile phone helps Chinese middle-class users to satisfy their social status requirements (Doctoroff, 2012). Gong, Stump, and Maddox (2013) studied

demographic factors influencing online shopping in China. They found out that the gender difference did not play a role in online shopping intention. However, when it comes to shopping adoption, Clemes, Gan, and Zhang (2014) suggest that more women tend to buy online. Also, Gong et al. (2013) declare that in China higher educational and income levels are linked to a bigger inclination to shop online. The higher level of education among online buyers is also confirmed by Clemes et al. (2014). However, in their research among Beijing citizens, higher income level did not influence online shopping adoption (Clemes et al., 2014). In 2016, 95% of children were enrolled in secondary school level whereas it was only 37% in 1990, which means that today's Chinese adolescents have access to a better level of education with more subjects and skill-oriented instruction (The World Bank, 2018a).

Doctoroff (2012) suggests that the success of e-commerce in China exploded from the moment when retailers understood the importance of delayed payment schemes, risk-free money back guarantees, as well as no transaction fees. However, some other factors play a significant role in the online shopping intention and adoption of Chinese customers. Clemes et al. (2014) identified seven key decision factors influencing Chinese online consumers. They are more likely to adopt online shopping if they have computer skills and a device with Internet access, they find convenience benefits in it, they have access to a wider range of products than on the physical marketplace, and if people around them encourage them to do so (subjective norms). Moreover, well-designed website factors, such as information content, security or product information, also have a positive influence on the potential buyers. In contrast, online shopping adoption is negatively influenced by perceived risk and poor service quality. Indeed, according to Omar et al. (2011, p. 228), "attitudes and perceptions towards risk, technology, vendor, website as well as perceived behavioral control, become precursors to any assessment of online satisfaction and are especially relevant in a collective society". However, a study conducted by Gong et al. (2013) suggest that even if Chinese consumers are aware of problems (perceived risk) that can occur through online transactions, such as a product that does not fit the expectations, unreliable customer service and security concerns of online payments, they do not have a significant impact on their online shopping intention.

Yu (2014) mentions trust as fundamental for the Chinese consumers during the buying process. They want to be assured that what they buy is guaranteed. To feel surer about

what they are intended to acquire, Chinese online shoppers extensively search for information on the Internet with the help of comparison sites, chat rooms, blogs or social media (Gong et al., 2013). They often rely on reviews and recommendations of other consumers (Doctoroff, 2012). Digital word of mouth is very important and can help reduce the risk of losing money buying a bad product (Doctoroff, 2012). According to Gong et al. (2013, p. 225), “information shared by other consumers can be very influential because it is not controlled by the marketers and is thus seen as more credible”. Furthermore, even for respectable items or services, Chinese consumers like to know that they did not waste money. In the online marketplace, getting the best deal is also important, even if it means bargaining. According to Doctoroff (2012, p. 76), Chinese online buyers are very price sensitive and “unwilling to pay an extra penny unless marketers can justify the price premium”. Chan and Zakkour (2014, p. 148) cite Gordon Orr, Senior Advisor at McKinsey, who said about Chinese consumers that “when they see products in retail stores they want to see if they can buy them cheaper online. They are looking for information and pricing comparisons on the Internet”.

Omar et al. (2011) conducted a study about the satisfaction of Chinese online shoppers. They found out that 9 relevant factors were determinant and had an influence on customer satisfaction. These are safe and fast delivery, provision of order information/product arrival information, security of the online payment, product quality, forum, chat room functions, easy to operate search engines, provision of differentiated products for comparison, highly detailed product information, ease of ordering and payment. Among them, they underline “safe and fast delivery” as one of the most important factors. Customers hope to benefit from a 24 hour delivery service when ordering online. Together, the quality of product information and order and product arrival information constitute the second most critical selling factor. Gong et al. (2013) suggested that online retailers should provide extensive relevant information and search mechanisms to help in product comparison.

2.2.2. Consumption in the Food Industry

Purchases in the food sector grew dramatically in China over the last three decades (Davis, 2000; Veeck and Burns, 2005). In particular, this improvement occurred thanks to the possibility for the citizen to acquire and possess refrigerators at home, to benefit from better food distribution and transportation systems and to have higher incomes and

purchasing power (Veeck and Burns, 2005). According to the Credit Suisse (2017), because they are becoming wealthier, Chinese eaters have developed a tendency to buy higher quality products and healthier food than before. They want to “upgrade their lifestyle” (Credit Suisse AG, 2017, p. 10). They place a greater value on food quality aspects as well as on products’ freshness (Lee, Lusk, Miroso, and Oey, 2014). However, despite the willingness to consume fresh food, meal delivery services also experienced extensive growth among the preferences of Chinese consumers. This effect can be explained by rising incomes and the opportunity to save time and spend money (Veeck and Burns, 2005). These arguments furthered the habit of ordering ready-to-eat alternatives. Fast groceries and meal delivery allow Chinese consumers to optimize their time (Credit Suisse AG, 2018). In fact, according to the *Emerging Consumer Survey 2018* from Credit Suisse (2018), 75% of Chinese interviewees declared “saving time” to be one of the key reasons for buying online. Where Chinese buyers also save time is when it comes to the payment. They do not need cash anymore since they can pay with their mobile. Indeed, their bank account is directly linked to the app they are ordering food from (Credit Suisse AG, 2018). It increases the convenience aspect of buying online.

However, whether it is for groceries, fresh food or meal delivery services, Chinese consumers have concerns about food safety and demand transparency (Yu, 2014). According to Lee et al. (2014, p. 100), they want safe food products “that can make them feel secure about their health”. They are afraid of food contamination stories (Doctoroff, 2012). For some products, international brands have a better image than Chinese ones and are preferred by consumers (Yu, 2014). Furthermore, long famous brands that have a long tradition equate to a food safety guarantee for some customers (Lee et al., 2014). According to Doctoroff (2012), this phenomenon also happens in the food and beverage sectors. However, Chinese citizens prefer to buy local ingredients for their pantry at home (Doctoroff, 2012). In its research *Total Retail 2017 - E-Commerce in China - The Future is Already Here*, the consulting firm PwC (2017) interrogated 894 Chinese online buyers of food about their reasons for shopping in this way. The consumers indicated price as the most important attribute in deciding to buy online. Second, Chinese consumers tend to purchase groceries from a retailer/brand that they know because they are worried about safety and quality concerns.

2.3. Online Shopping Motivations

As researchers tried to understand consumer behavior, they also tended to analyze the primary reasons why people actually bought things, or, in other words, what were their shopping motivations (To, Liao, and Lin, 2007). With the emergence of online commerce, researchers wanted to understand if the motivations were the same in the online market as in the physical one (To et al., 2007; Topaloglu, 2012).

Researchers have agreed on the fact that there are basically two types of motives that drive people to shop. Online as well as offline consumers are motivated by functional and non-functional values (To et al., 2007; Topaloglu, 2012). These values are also called utilitarian and hedonic motivations. Utilitarian motives are task-related and rational (Topaloglu, 2012). In this context, consumers have a defined goal, which is to buy a product, and they want to achieve it in an efficient and timely manner (Topaloglu, 2012). As explained by To et al. (2007, p. 775), “shopping starts from a mission or task, and the acquired benefit depends on whether the mission is completed or not, or whether the mission is completed efficiently during the process”. The buyers acting according to utilitarian values want an easy-to-find process on the website, cherish convenience, price and product selection, and do not feel committed to socializing (Tuncay Zayer and Coleman, 2012). Overby and Lee (2006, p. 1161) point out that “utilitarian value is defined as an overall assessment (i.e., judgment) of functional benefits and sacrifices”. The concept of “value for the money” is relevant for utilitarian shoppers (Overby and Lee, 2006). On the contrary, hedonic motives are based on the experiential and emotional benefits of shopping (Topaloglu, 2012). In this context, consumers are looking for happiness, fantasy, awakening, sensuality, and enjoyment (To et al., 2007, p. 775) when shopping. Buyers driven by hedonic values consider shopping as an activity rather than a task (Overby and Lee, 2006). They want to feel their senses during the buying process and enjoy entertainment (Tuncay Zayer and Coleman, 2012). Often, they use Internet shopping as a place of social interaction (Tuncay Zayer and Coleman, 2012). Hedonic consumers would like to live out of the ordinary experiences when they shop (Overby and Lee, 2006).

According to Wolfinbarger and Gilly (2000), goal-oriented motives are the main reason people choose to buy online rather than at a physical store. The authors cite important factors influencing online buyers such as accessibility/convenience, broad selection,

information availability, control of sociality, and commitment to goal - not experience. On the Internet, buyers want to achieve their goal in an efficient manner and tend to repeat their purchases on a website if they are satisfied with the buying process. To cite Wolfinbarger and Gilly (2000, p. 1364), “offering goal-oriented online consumers what they want, when they want it, and answering inquiries in a timely fashion creates loyalty.”. According to the authors, experiential motivations tend to be more influential on offline buyers than online ones. As for Childers, Carr, Peck, and Carson (2001), they mention two fundamental factors that influence online buyers. First, navigation allows greater freedom of choice and the possibility to search for information on the products. Their study even suggests that online consumers are less price sensitive and buy more expensive products when they can find high-quality information about the items. Second, convenience refers to the possibility for the buyers to shop at home, every day, at any time. This is particularly important when they lack time. Indeed, by purchasing on the Internet they can cut down on travel duration. Specifically, according to their observational research, convenience is the biggest motivation of American buyers when doing online grocery shopping.

Convenience is also the most important influencing factor for Lithuanian online consumers, as shown in a study by Bagdoniene and Zemblyte (2009). The authors define convenience as the opportunity to save time, the possibility to shop online 24 hours a day, and fast access to information (Bagdoniene and Zemblyte, 2009). Other important motives for Lithuanian online buyers are the broad range of products available in the online marketplace, as well as the possibility to collect information about them. However, the study reveals that, among the tested dimensions, the ability to compare prices has the weakest influence on online buyers. Perea y Monsuwé, Dellaert, and De Ruyter (2004) tried to produce a framework of drivers of consumers’ attitude and intention to shop online. They proceeded to a literature review regarding consumers’ perceptions of value dimensions. Interestingly, only two utilitarian motivations, ease of use and usefulness, as well as one hedonic motive, enjoyment, were determinant in their model of intention to buy online.

Overby and Lee (2006) analyzed the effects of utilitarian and hedonic online shopping values on consumer preferences and intentions. According to their findings, utilitarian motivation is the main reason why people shop online. In other words, two benefits, price

savings and convenience, are of primary importance for online buyers. Hedonic motivations are also important but have a more significant impact on infrequent shoppers than usual ones. To cite their words, the “more Internet experience a shopper gains, the less likely s/he is to be influenced by visual appeals and experiential features on a website. Ultimately, the Internet shopper becomes more task-oriented as s/he gains experience on the retailer’s Internet site.” (Overby and Lee, 2006, p. 1164).

The results of Overby and Lee (2006) were somewhat contradicted by Topaloglu (2012), who explored the influences of utilitarian and hedonic values on online shoppers in Turkey. The investigation validated the fact that online buyers are driven by both functional and non-functional motives. However, in contrast to the conclusions of Overby and Lee (2006), in the case of Turkish consumers, hedonic values have a more significant importance for the beginning of the online purchase process, that is to say the search intention. According to Topaloglu (2012, p. 15), “consumers in Turkey enjoy the exploration activity and emphasize more on the searching process itself rather than what is acquired”. This statement highlights the relevance of non-functional motives such as adventure/explore, social, idea, value, authority, and status for young Turkish consumers.

In their study of American male shoppers, Tuncay Zayer and Coleman (2012) interviewed 13 men to investigate their shopping motivations and intentions to search information on the Internet. The convenience and availability of information were motivations cited by the participants several times during the interviews. Furthermore, the ability for the shoppers to compare prices to be sure they got the best deal was another major value. Some buyers were also highly reliant on reviews of other users to improve their confidence in buying an item on the Internet. Finally, some online buyers appreciated the fact that they could avoid salespeople during their individual online purchasing experience. This phenomenon was also mentioned in other parts of the literature and was called “lack of sociality” by To et al. (2007).

Also investigating the influence of shopping motivations from both utilitarian and hedonic perspectives, To et al. (2007) analyzed the shopping drive of online consumers in Taiwan. The results, founded on a sample of 104 Taiwanese consumers, agreed with Overby and Lee (2006) as the researchers concluded that utilitarian motivation was the strongest predictor of intention to search and purchase online. For the study, To et al. (2007) used a self-constructed framework, based on previous studies and modifications.

The model was made of six utilitarian values, that were cost saving, convenience, selection, information availability, lack of sociality, and customized products/services, and five hedonic values, adventure/explore, social, idea, values, and authority & status. They hypothesized that every value had a positive influence on search intention of a potential online buyer. They used questionnaires and more than 40 items to measure the relationship between motivations and search and purchase intentions. However, the results of the analysis showed that for Taiwanese consumers only four utilitarian and two hedonistic motives had an influence on their search intention. These determinants were convenience, cost saving, information availability, selection, adventure, and authority & status.

In their article discussing online shopping adoption in Beijing, Clemes et al. (2014) mentioned that the reasons Chinese buyers use online platforms are the possibility to have products delivered at home, convenience, peer influence, lower price, Internet experience, and ease in purchasing. These findings are aligned with the ones of Gong et al. (2013). The investigators found that for Chinese consumers the advantages associated with online shopping are saving time, lower prices and wider selection. They also suggest that Chinese customers tend to be utilitarian and value the efficient nature of online shopping (Gong et al., 2013). Furthermore, Chinese online buyers enjoy the possibility of seeking out information shared by other users. They feel safer relying on external reviews because these are not controlled by the marketers and reflect reality (Gong et al., 2013).

Although these two last research findings apply to Chinese consumers, who are also the focus of this study, they do not explain their motivations to buy food online. Because the development of economy, consumption, and technology grew in a different and drastic manner in emerging countries, such as China, customers there tended to adopt a different behavior than their Western counterparts when it comes to food shopping habits in the online marketplace (Omar et al., 2011). There is still a lack of research and literature on online consumer behavior in this region (Omar et al., 2011; Park and Kim, 2006). So far, there is not a validated framework of consumer motivations that can explain the behavior of Chinese online customers in the food sector. Their motivations to buy food online are still to be understood and analyzed in an academic manner.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Framework

To understand the motives of Chinese consumers when it comes to their food purchases in the online market, the two previous explained types of dimension, which are utilitarian and hedonic values, are explored. These functional and non-functional motives have been chosen and tested by many researchers as stated in the previous chapter 2.3. “Online Shopping Motivations”. Therefore, a research model based on these two items appears to be suitable to investigate the shopping motivations of Chinese customers in the food sector. The theoretical framework illustrated in Figure 3 shows the two axes of online shopping motivations that are investigated by this study. The determinants are based on the research of To et al. (2007), who determined these utilitarian and hedonistic motives after a review of many years of specialist extant literature review in the field (To et al., 2007). The following theoretical framework constitutes the basis for the present research. However, it is worth mentioning that this model is only a guide and that other dimensions may emerge during the research process if new ideas are generated, which is the goal of this investigation.

Online Shopping Motivations	
Utilitarian Rational	Hedonic Emotional
Cost Saving Convenience Selection Information Availability Lack of Sociality Customized Products / Services	Adventure / Exploration Social Idea Value Authority / Status

Figure 3: Theoretical Framework (adapted from To et al. (2007))

A brief definition of each determinant, according to the study of To et al. (2007), is provided in the following. Furthermore, Table 1 lists the sources mentioned in the literature review and refers to the determinants used in the theoretical framework above.

Utilitarian Motives

“Cost saving” refers to the possibility for the consumer to purchase the same product as in the physical market but at a lower price. “Convenience” means that in the online marketplace there is no limit of time, space, or weather conditions for the consumer to make his/her purchases. S/he can shop 24/7 and in a comfortable manner, from home for example. More products and a more diversified assortment are comprised in “Selection”. “Information Availability” gives the opportunity for the consumer to investigate numerous online public resources and searching tools to find information about products and services. “Lack of Sociality” means that the buyers are not bothered by any sales person when making their choice. Customized packaging, shipment or design of the product are part of “Customized Product/Service”.

Hedonic Motives

With “Adventure/Explore” motive the consumer expects to feel the joy of exploration, sensual excitement and novel experience. “Social” is when the buyer communicates through a virtual community, makes friends on the Internet and enjoys conversations online. The “Idea” motive implies that the online shopper learns about new trends and can find and evaluate information about brands or products directly on the web. When the purchaser can profit from discounts and successfully bargain with the vendor, his/her satisfaction of personal achievement increases. This is what is called the “Value” motive. “Authority/Status” refers to the fact that the online buyer can take his/her own decision regarding which product s/he wants to look at, when to place an order or when to receive the good. S/he feels like having a higher level of control and authority than in the physical marketplace.

Motivation	Literature
Cost Saving	Bagdoniene and Zemblyte (2009) Clemes et al. (2014) Doctoroff (2012) Gong et al. (2013) Omar et al. (2011) Overby and Lee (2006)

	Tuncay Zayer and Coleman (2012)
Convenience	Childers et al. (2001) Clemes et al. (2014) Degeratu et al. (2000) Omar et al. (2011) Overby and Lee (2006) Tuncay Zayer and Coleman (2012) Wolfenbarger and Gilly (2000)
Selection	Anderson and Swaminatha (2011) Bagdoniene and Zemblyte (2009) Clemes et al. (2014) Gong et al. (2013) Omar et al. (2011) Tuncay Zayer and Coleman (2012) Wolfenbarger and Gilly (2000)
Information Availability	Alba et al. (2009) Childers et al. (2001) Lutz and Wood (1997) Anderson and Swaminatha (2011) Gong et al. (2013) Park and Kim (2013) Penn (2009) Tuncay Zayer and Coleman (2012) Yang et al. (2010) Wolfenbarger and Gilly (2000)
Lack of Sociality	Tuncay Zayer and Coleman (2012) Wolfenbarger and Gilly (2000)
Customized Products / Services	Anderson and Swaminatha (2011)

Adventure / Exploration	Overby and Lee (2006) To et al. (2007) Topaloglu (2012) Yu (2014)
Social	Chau et al. (2002) Tuncay Zayer and Coleman (2012) Gong et al. (2013)
Idea	Topaloglu (2012)
Value	Doctoroff (2012) Clemes et al. (2014) Tuncay Zayer and Coleman (2012)
Authority / Status	Anderson and Swaminatha (2011) Yu (2014)

Table 1: Online Shopping Motivations and Corresponding Literature

3.2. Research Design

According to Creswell (2014, p. 247), research designs are “types of inquiry within qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches that provide specific direction for procedures in a research study”. The present research design combines secondary and primary sources. Secondary research, in the form of desk research, will seek to find information that already exists regarding Chinese online customers and their behavior in the food industry. It will help to understand the latest market trends and narrow the need for further primary research. In this sense, primary research will be conducted to fill in the gaps in the literature available so far and the latest results of the market. It will aim to gain a deeper understanding of the topic studied from the point of view of Chinese customers as well as from an e-commerce expert’s perspective. Table 2 provides an overview of the research design.

Source	Secondary	Primary	
Type	Databases	Qualitative interviews	
Objective	Gathering information about the latest market trends	Deepening results	
		Capturing the opinion of consumers	Capturing the opinion of an e-commerce expert
Instrument	Texts and documents Statistics	Semi-structured interviews	Semi-structured interview

Table 2: Research Design Overview

3.3. Secondary Research

Secondary data is the information that “exists regardless of a researcher’s questioning, prompting and probing” (Creswell, 2014, p. 356). In this case, secondary data will provide the latest market trends in China regarding the online food marketplace. Plus, it will reveal some information regarding Chinese online buyers, particularly their gender and age. It will also be interesting to know if online orders are more likely to be placed through a computer or smartphone to get more details about the behavior of the consumers. Table 3 provides an overview of the different types of texts that are going to be collected and the sources the investigator will use. A critical review of the data will take the project forward and enable the primary research to be more precise.

Type of Text	Source	Purpose
Official data and records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Bureau of Statistics of China China Internet Network Information Center World Bank 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External environment: economic and technological changes that have an influence on the online food industry Industry: trends, successful companies, mobile vs. computer orders

Organizational documents and statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market research and consulting firm • Statista 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers: profile (gender, age), preferences
-----------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Table 3: Secondary Data Collection

Secondary data presents the advantages that the information has already been collected by another party and that it is quick to obtain (O'Leary, 2014). However, there are some requirements that need to be considered when collecting the data. According to Kolb (2008), the researcher should verify the relevance (addresses the issue), credibility (coming from a reliable source), and accuracy (must be correct) of the information found. Furthermore, data should be affordable, meaning for free or in line with the research budget, and not be outdated. The investigator of this study will examine the authenticity of each source before considering taking it into account in the research. In the case of sources found on Internet pages, screenshots will be done to avoid the risk of losing the information. Each text will be reviewed, and the content will be explored in order to outline the relevant data addressing the research question of this study.

3.4. Primary Research

3.4.1. Method and Data Collection

Primary data is the information that is collected by the investigator in accordance with his/her research purpose (Creswell, 2014). In the present study, primary research in the form of qualitative inquiry is needed. Creswell (2014, p. 4) defines qualitative research as “an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem”. According to Schiffman and Wisenblit (2015, p. 93), qualitative research aims “to delve into the consumer’s unconscious or hidden motivations”. Moreover, it is said to be especially useful to gather information about particular populations and their opinions and behaviors (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, and Namey, 2005). Hence, qualitative research has the aim of exploring phenomena and describing individual experiences. In contrast to quantitative data, it does not have the purpose of generalizing results (Mills, Airasian, and Gay, 2011).

Whether it is to gain a deep understanding of the motivations of Chinese consumers when it comes to their shopping behavior in the food sector or to have the opinion of an expert, in-depth interviews are needed for this study. The in-depth interview allows to “elicit a vivid picture of the participant’s perspective on the research topic.” (Mack et al., 2005, p. 29). More particularly, the interviews in the present case will be conducted in a semi-structured way. This technique implies the researcher starts asking questions defined in the core of a general framework and allows new ideas to be brought up during the discussion. Furthermore, according to Mack et al. (2005, p. 4), open-ended questions “have the ability to evoke responses that are meaningful and culturally salient to the participant, unanticipated by the researcher, and rich and explanatory in nature”.

Given the extensive geographical distance between the location of the researcher and the sample subjects, the interviews will be conducted via voice or video call. Moreover, since the Chinese government banned the access to certain Western communication applications, such as Skype, and social media, such as Facebook, the best way to establish a communication with Chinese citizens will be the use of the Chinese application for smartphones WeChat. This enables two users to have a conversation over the Internet network and is, therefore, free of cost for any person having access to the Internet.

For each interview, the investigator will use an interview protocol containing basic information such as date and interviewee’s name (or pseudonym according to the following chapter 3.4.4.), demographic information asked during the recruitment process, notes for the introduction/presentation at the beginning, and guiding questions. It is also recommended that the interviewer prepares a final thank-you statement to express at the end of each interview (Creswell, 2014). In this document, the researcher will also be able to take notes and write any thoughts that come to mind during the interview.

During the data collection phase, the investigator will listen carefully to the subjects, engage with them and try to use probes to encourage them with the elaboration of their answers (Mack et al., 2005). Probing questions will ask for elaboration, definition, word association or clarification, as recommended by Schiffman & Wisenblit (2015, p. 409) in their approach to depth interviews. Each interview will be audiotaped and transcribed for further analysis (chapter 3.4.6.).

3.4.2. Sampling

Consumers Interviews

Chinese online buyers of food products constitute the population of the present research. The participants will be selected according to specific criteria in order to fit with the research question and objectives expressed in Chapter 1. First, a participant must come from and live in China. S/he has to be an active buyer of food online. S/he should be born between 1980 and 1998 since the research focuses on the growing middle-class. S/he lives in an urban area and has or did have access to higher education. According to Darley et al. (2010), students are a relevant population in the case of online consumer behavior studies because of their numbers in the Internet marketplace and the time they spend online per week.

Generalization is not the goal of qualitative research. Therefore, the size of the sample does not tend to be big and representative of the population. Taking into account the time available for this study, it has been agreed on a sample size of six subjects. Moreover, because the research is not oriented toward the study of one gender in particular, the sample will include both of them in an equal number to avoid any gender bias. A non-probability convenience sampling method will be used to select the participants. In addition, since the sample should include an equal number of both genders, the quota method will be used to limit the interviews when the ratio is reached for one gender. Table 4 gives an overview of the sampling process for the consumers.

Type	Description
Population	Chinese online buyers of food products
Sample	Chinese citizen, online buyer, born between 1980 and 1998, well-educated, living in an urban area, male/female
Sample size	6
Sampling method	Non-probability, convenience, quota sample

Table 4: Consumers Sampling Overview

Expert Interview

To gain a deeper understanding of Chinese consumers, the opinion of a specialist in e-commerce will be needed. The individual to be approached is an expert in e-commerce for China specifically. Given the resources and time available for this research, only one interview will be conducted. A purposive sampling method will be used since the aim is to recruit someone who is fully qualified to participate. Table 5 gives an overview of the sampling process for the expert.

Type	Description
Population	Specialist in e-commerce
Sample	Specialist in e-commerce for China
Sample size	1
Sampling method	Purposive sample

Table 5: Expert Sampling Overview

3.4.3. Recruitment

The researcher will seek the assistance of a contact person in China to identify potential participants. The contact person will have an extensive network among young Chinese people and will act as an intermediary between the researcher and the possible subjects for the study. First, the author of this study will compose an incentive, in the form of a text, to recruit participants. This text will be further distributed by the contact person. Then, voluntary participants will be selected by the researcher according to the criteria under section 3.3.2. A personal contact will then be established with the prospects to confirm their interest in taking part in the study and to repeat the volunteer and confidential aspects of it. The processes will be similar whether seeking customers or experts, except that the text for the incentive will be adapted to suit the audience. Both texts can be found in Appendix 1. Furthermore, the search for an expert will also be conducted by the author with the help of her own network on social media, such as on the professional platform LinkedIn. This is a fast procedure which allows the researcher to look for and contact potential participants directly, send them personalized messages, and already engage in conversation with each of them before meeting. Moreover, the expert's

line of enquiry can reach a large audience thanks to the help of the people who are part of the researcher's network and who will further relay the message.

3.4.4. Ethical Considerations

Ethics is a central point of research (O'Leary, 2014). Researchers should conduct their studies in such a way that they are not offensive, degrading, humiliating, or dangerous (O'Leary, 2014). Furthermore, they should protect the participants and develop a trust with them (Creswell, 2014). According to Creswell (2014, p. 92), ethical questions appear "in such issues as personal disclosure, authenticity, and credibility of the research reports". The role of the researchers in cross-cultural contexts is of the highest importance (Creswell, 2014). Moreover, ethical issues can appear prior to, during or after a study, when reporting (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, it is important that the researcher is aware of the possible issues before starting any inquiry. The relevant ethical considerations of this study are presented in the following paragraphs.

First, when approaching potential subjects with incentives, the researcher will not be perceived as intrusive or insistent. If an individual does not want to participate in the research, the investigator will respect his or her decision and not insist. Every individual of the sample will participate voluntarily and not be forced to. The researcher will then get informed consent from the subjects. Therefore, they will have to be informed about the exact purpose of the research and what it means to participate. To this end, the investigator will share his/her expectations as well as communicate about the way the interviews will be done and the length of time that is required for them. Then, the researcher should mention the possibility of leaving the study at any time and promise to respect the decision of participants who do so.

The researcher will respect the participants' confidentiality by ensuring that no-one but the investigator takes part in the interviews. As the personal data of the participants will be known by the researcher, complete anonymity cannot be guaranteed. However, when divulging the results, the researcher will refer to a person's response without revealing his or her identity or by using fictitious names (pseudonyms) so that the identity of the subjects remains confidential, as encouraged by the American Psychological Association's ethics code (American Psychological Association [APA], 2017). Every participant will be treated equally. Data will be transcribed according to the true words of each of them and will not be manipulated. Also, during the data collection process, the

researcher will respect the privacy of the subjects by staying on the topic of the inquiry and not starting to discuss other subjects. Since the studied topic relates to personal life and consumption habits, any refusal to answer a question should be respected.

In addition to the “standard” ethical aspects a researcher faces in qualitative research, the international aspect of this study adds difficulties to be taken into consideration when preparing the inquiry. Cultural differences between the researcher and the subjects can affect their way of interacting and communicating with each other, and, consequently, the quality and results of the interviews. The researcher needs to anticipate these cultural differences (Creswell, 2014) with good preparation. Communication aspects, meaning language and non-verbal communication, such as facial expression and gesture, must be controlled in order to avoid any misunderstanding or confusion between the two interlocutors during video interviews (Pogosyan, 2017). Furthermore, in order to avoid any Chinese consumer feeling uncomfortable speaking face-to-face with the researcher, s/he will allow them to choose if they prefer to speak via voice or video call.

The interviews will be conducted in English. This is a foreign language and not expected to be the mother tongue of the participants, so it can be a challenge for them to speak freely and express what they want to say even if they speak it at a very good level. They must feel comfortable expressing themselves in another language and this can only be insured by the awareness, comprehension, and cooperation of the researcher. The more comfortable the interviewees feel, the more they will be willing to share their experience with the investigator (Tsang, 1998).

3.4.5. Validity and Reliability

Qualitative validity implies that the researcher evaluates the accuracy of her or his findings with the help of a specific procedure (Creswell, 2014). In this case, the author will have a peer debriefer with whom discuss about the methodology used. The peer debriefer will be allowed to ask questions or formulate comments about the qualitative method. Furthermore, it is recommended that the author share his/her self-reflection regarding the procedure used and the interpretation of the findings (Creswell, 2014). This will be added to the last chapter of this study. Qualitative reliability means that the researcher justifies the consistency of his or her approach (Creswell, 2014). This is the reason why every step of the research process is detailed in this paper.

3.4.6. Analytic Approach

Qualitative data can be analyzed with the help of specific qualitative content methods (Mayring, 2000). More precisely, Mayring (2000, p. 2) states “qualitative content analysis defines itself within this framework as an approach of empirical, methodological controlled analysis of texts within their context of communication, following content analytical rules and step by step models, without rash quantification”. To this aim, the interviews will be transcribed, and the data will be coded. Coding is “the process of organizing the data by bracketing chunks (or text or image segments) and writing a word representing a category in the margins.” (Creswell, 2014, pp. 197-198). The codes will generate the creation of specific patterns and help to understand the customers’ thoughts and motivations, as well as the expert’s insights.

Codes can emerge during the data analysis process, be determined in advance or both together (Creswell, 2014). Mayring (2000) names the process of using predetermined codes as the “deductive category application”. It connects prior formulated theoretical aspects with the text. This method prompts the investigator to first determine categories based on the theory. Then, definitions and examples for each category should be formulated. All items mentioned should be summarized in a coding agenda. After the coding agenda has been revised, the texts can be worked through. Finally, the researcher should provide an interpretation of the texts in line with the coding results. Furthermore, the investigator can choose to provide some quantitative results such as the frequencies of codes. To support the comprehension of the method, Figure 4 illustrates the different steps of the deductive category applications proposed by Mayring (2000).

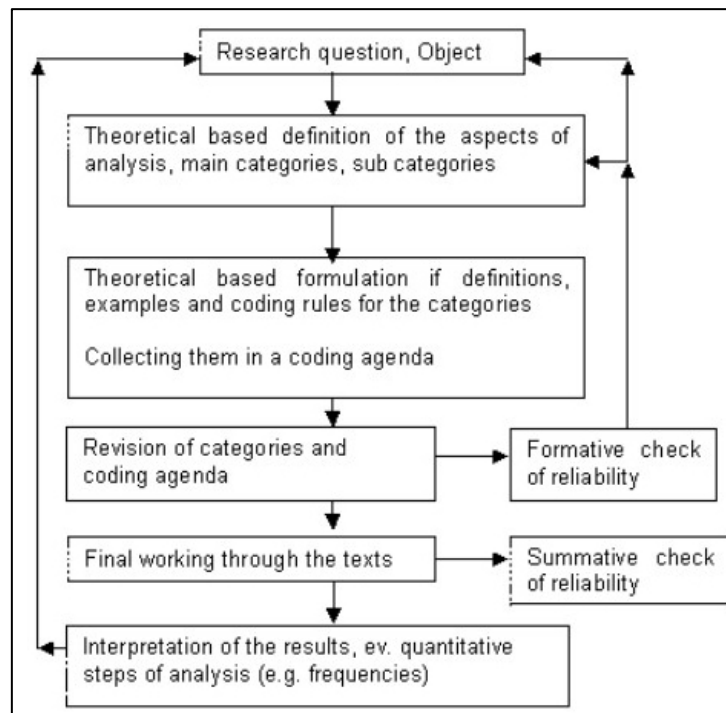


Figure 4: Step Model of Deductive Category Application (Mayring, 2000)

Based on the literature and the research framework illustrated in chapter 3.1., some codes already exist for the current research. They will be used to analyze the interviews of the Chinese consumers. Moreover, there is the possibility that new codes emerge during the analysis process since Chinese customers may have different motivations than the ones described so far in the research model. Creswell (2014) suggests researchers prepare a table containing a list of predetermined codes to maximize their coherence. Similarly, as mentioned above, Mayring (2000) recommends using a coding agenda referencing the coding category, the definition, and examples. Hence, Table 6 provides the coding agenda for the further analyses of the interviews, with examples of assumptions that could possibly appear. Some assumption examples are taken from the quantitative study conducted by To et al. (2007). The codes should be applied to the corresponding category if they are in line with the definition. Otherwise, a new category should be created.

To highlight the selected categories, or motivations, two coding cycles will be completed when analyzing the interviews. “In vivo” coding will be used to highlight the thoughts of the interviewees in the first coding cycle. This technique focuses on the terms used by the participants themselves and prioritizes the participant’s voice (King, 2012). During the second coding cycle, the “pattern” coding method will be used. This method is especially

applicable when grouping summaries and looking for explanations in the data (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, 2013). In this case, the patterns are the categories defined in the research framework and described in Table 6. In the end, the patterns should be separated into two themes, functional and non-functional motives.

Category	Definition	Examples
C1: Cost Saving	Possibility for the consumer to purchase the same product as in the physical market but at a lower price.	<i>Save money; offers me the best price; it's cheaper</i>
C2: Convenience	Shopping in a comfortable manner, less limit of time, space, or weather conditions for the consumer to make his/her purchases.	<i>Whenever I want; without going out; fits with my schedule; convenient for me</i>
C3: Selection	More products and a more diversified assortment.	<i>More choice; access to many brands</i>
C4: Information Availability	Opportunity for the consumer to investigate numerous online public resources and searching tools to find information about products and services.	<i>Quick access to large volumes of information; information from the web is useful;</i>
C5: Lack of Sociality	The buyer is not bothered by any sales person when making his/her choice.	<i>Avoid social interaction with others; avoid salespeople</i>
C6: Customized Products / Services	Access to customized packaging, shipment, or design of a product.	<i>Purchase recommendations match my needs; order products that are tailor-made for me;</i>

C7: Adventure / Exploration	The consumer expects to feel the joy of exploration, sensual excitement and novel experience.	<i>Feel like I am in my own universe; to me, online shopping is an adventure</i>
C8: Social	The customer communicates through a virtual community, makes friends thanks to the Internet and enjoys conversations online.	<i>Exchange information with friends; share experiences with others; extend personal relationship</i>
C9: Idea	The online buyer learns about new trends and can find and evaluate information about brands or products directly on the web.	<i>Keep up with the trends; see what new products are available</i>
C10: Value	When the buyer can profit from discounts and successfully bargain with the vendor, his/her satisfaction of personal achievement increases.	<i>I go online shopping when there are sales; I enjoy looking for discounts</i>
C11: Authority / Status	The online buyer can take his/her own decision regarding which product s/he wants to look at, when to place an order or when to receive the good. S/he feels like having a high level of control and authority.	<i>When shopping online I feel in control of my expenses</i>

Table 6: Coding Agenda

Regarding the analysis of the expert's interview, descriptive coding will be used. According to Saldana (2009, p. 3), descriptive code "summarizes the primary topic of the excerpt". In contrast to the method described above, the codes will emerge during the analytic process.

4. Findings

The following section presents the findings of the secondary and primary research processes. The secondary research met with some difficulties. Due to lack of inquiry into the topic, only a few data could be found about the motivations of Chinese online buyers of food. Furthermore, when information seemed relevant, it was often not available for free. Last, potentially useful Chinese websites were often not translated into English. Hence, only a few sources were relevant for this part of the study. However, the data found provides an overview of the situation of Internet usage and shopping in China as well as the drivers in the online food industry. It provides support for the primary research. In this regard, the findings of the interviews are described in chapter 4.2. This part, however, only presents the results of the consumers' interviews. Indeed, even if the investigator was in contact with some professionals to organize interviews, it did not work out in the end and the study had to be conducted without any expert's insight. The complete list of individuals who were in touch with the researcher is provided in Appendix 1.

4.1. Chinese Online Market Place

4.1.1. Environment, Industry Trends, and Consumers Profile

Studying the latest *Statistical Report on Internet Development in China* published by the China Internet Network Information Center [CNNIC] in 2017 revealed that in December 2016 731 million Internet users were active in China. With regard to the total residents of the country of 1,378,665 citizens in 2016 (The World Bank, 2018b), the number of users corresponds to a penetration rate of 53.2%. Among them, 695 million or 91.5%, are active mobile users, as illustrated in Figure 5. Furthermore, 60.1% of them acknowledged using desktops too, whereas it was only 36.8% connected to the Internet from a laptop.

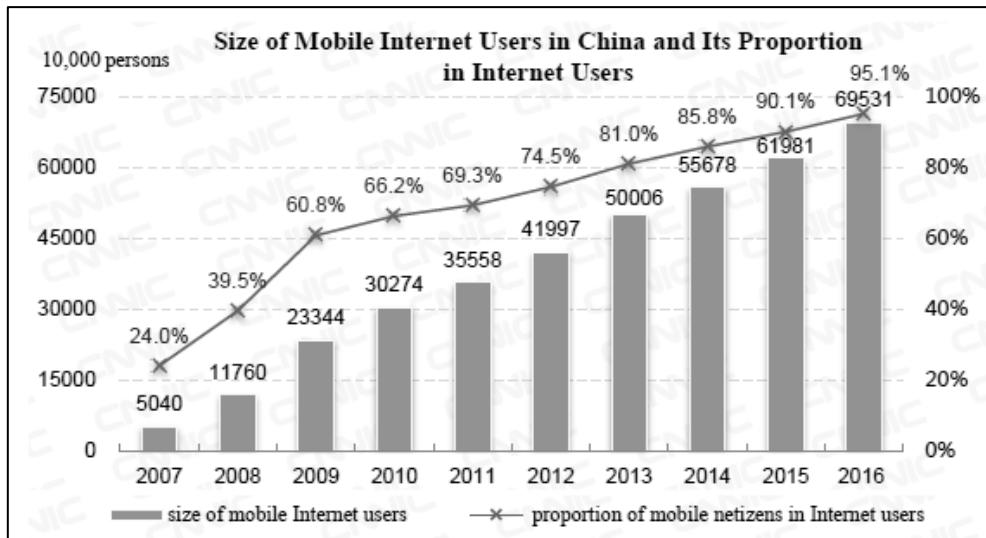


Figure 5: Size of Mobile Internet Users in China and Its Proportion in Internet Users (CNNIC, 2017)

After Beijing, Shanghai is the city with the 2nd biggest Internet penetration rate since 74.1% of its citizen are connected to the online world. This shows the significance of this study focusing on consumers of one of the biggest user population, Shanghai, for the primary research. According to the statistics of CNNIC (2017), there is a gender parity of 52.4% male and 47.6% female surfing on the Internet. Here again, it provides support for the decision to interview equal numbers of men and women during the interview phase.

Regarding their age, the biggest proportion of Internet users are between 20 and 29 years old. They represent 30.3% of the users. Moreover, together with the 30 – 39 years old generation, they totalize 53.5% of the connected population. Students are currently the largest group of netizens in China since they represent 25% of the users. Among all of them, 63.5% completed secondary education level. When users are classified according to their monthly income, it appears that middle-level citizens earning between 2001 and 5000 yuan represent 40.9% of the users. Chinese users spend around 26.4 hours per week on the Internet. This number equates to a time of 3 hours 45 minutes a day $[(26.4/7)]$. For 91.1% of them, their first reason to be present on the Internet is for instant messaging. Online shopping is an activity completed by 63.8% of netizens and 63.4% of mobile users, a rate that grew by 29.8% in between 2015 and 2016. In total, 441 million Chinese consumers bought goods on the Internet in 2016.

According to the World Economic Forum, China accounts for 42% of the global e-commerce, overtaking the US, whose market share is 24% (World Economic Forum, 2018). The strengths of the country are its digital system, the degree of digitization of its industries as well as the focus on digital technologies to shift and create value (World Economic Forum, 2018). Indeed, digitization of the Sino economy is a priority for the actual government to boost its competitiveness on the global market (McKinsey, 2017). Three leading companies are paving the way when it comes to new technologies in the e-commerce sector, Baidu, Alibaba and Tencent (McKinsey, 2017). Alibaba and Tencent are particularly relevant in the food industry since they run the most important online groceries and meal delivery service applications. The fact that mobile phones became an important part in consumers' daily lives contributed to the growth of the online food industry (Deloitte, 2017). A survey conducted by the consulting firm PwC (2017) showed that mobile-first consumer behavior, innovative social commerce models, as well as trusted digital payments are the drivers of the e-commerce market in China.

4.1.2. Drivers of Online Food Consumption

Statistics show that physical retailing is cooling down in China (Deloitte, 2017). At the same time, according to PwC (2017), in 2016 e-commerce only represented 5% of the total FMCG industry in China. In the sector, food products constitute a growing online market (PwC, 2017). PwC asked 894 Chinese online shoppers whether they preferred to search and buy groceries in-store or online. 62% of the Chinese consumers indicated choosing online media for both activities (PwC, 2017). According to CNNIC (2017), in 2016, 28.5% of users, or 209 million Chinese consumers, ordered meals online. Interestingly, 27.9% of users ordered meals via mobile, which suggests that 97.9% of meal orders are sent from a mobile app $[27,9 \times 100 / 28,5]$. Meal delivery services have continued to explode in China since both ratios grew respectively by 83.7% and 86.2% between 2015 and 2016. Development of logistics capabilities throughout the whole country participated in this growth (PwC, 2017). By using better logistic timeliness and sophisticated algorithms, e-commerce platforms started to offer express delivery and to recommend nearby order possibilities to improve the user experience. Those two components contributed to the convenience aspect of online shopping and the growth of customers in this sector (CNNIC, 2017). According to PwC (2017), 200 Chinese cities can benefit from same-day or next-day delivery. The consulting firm clarifies,

“We are still in the early days of online fresh food in China, but the market is already highly competitive with eCommerce giants, logistics companies, traditional supermarkets, and various well-funded start-ups attempting to capture a slice of this high growth market. [...] We also see regionally focused O2O [“online to offline”] models which pick-up goods from supermarkets and fulfill the last mile.” (PwC, 2017, p. 26).

These improvements are also supported by Angela Wang, expert in retail, strategy and business development in China, based in Beijing and currently working as Partner & Managing Director for the Boston Consulting Group (Boston Consulting Group, n.d.). During a conference in Milan in October 2017, the expert mentioned three trends happening in the online grocery industry in China (TED Conferences LLC, 2017). First, customers tend to place orders very spontaneously, “one click after another”. Second, they seek out ultra-convenience, meaning the ability to have products delivered at home in the next hours, or minutes. As she stated, “*in China, we have learned that convenience is really the glue that will make online shopping a behavior and a habit that sticks*” (Angela Wang, TED Conferences LLC, 2017, 6’08). Later, she added, “*if you give them ultra-convenience that really works in grocery shopping, they’re going to switch their shopping behaviors online, like, in no time.*” (Angela Wang, TED Conferences LLC, 2017, 8’10). Last, social shopping appears to be the new way of consuming. Integrated ecosystems, such as the app WeChat, allow consumers to share a product with added information and personal recommendations that directly influence their network and push them into an easy process of ordering and consuming.

4.2. Chinese Food Shopping Experience World

This chapter shows the results emerging from the primary research, that is the interviews with Chinese consumers. Soon after the researcher had sent the first incentives through networks in China, nine Chinese individuals contacted the author to take part in the study. After the investigator had the first contact with each of the individuals to ensure they fulfilled the requirements for the desired sample, six of them remained eligible for the study. All interviews with Chinese consumers happened between 8th and 13th of July 2018. They lasted between 15 minutes and 40 minutes, depending on the participant’s personality and willingness to share information. As explained in the research design,

interviews were completed with the help of the Chinese instant messaging application WeChat. Participants could choose whether they preferred to use voice or video call so that they felt comfortable speaking with the researcher. Hence, four of the interviews were done via voice call, whereas video call was used for two of them. Three men and three women, aged between 22 and 35 years old, took part in the study. Five interviews were completed in English. One interview was done in French because it was preferred to English by one of the interviewees and matched the mother tongue of the author. Each of the participants was living in Shanghai, even though some of them had some years of experience living abroad.

First, in the following, results of the first and second coding processes of the consumers' interviews' transcripts are provided. It explains how the two coding processes were completed and how the coding agenda was used. Second, in chapter 4.2.2., each of the participants is described in order to offer a deep understanding of their individual world views. All interview transcripts appear in Appendix 2.

4.2.1. Findings of the Coding Process

After each transcript was read many times and after the author got familiar with the coding agenda, the first coding cycle could start. To this aim, each of the texts was analyzed one after the other. Another investigation could not start before the previous interview had been read and completely coded in order to allow the investigator to gain a profound understanding of the experience of one person before analyzing another's. Indeed, the first (in vivo) and second (pattern) coding cycles were completed several times in order to avoid missing relevant assumptions and to ensure that the codes were classified in the right categories. The entire examination of the interviews resulted in 518 codes. Interestingly, one category was not used at all during the whole analysis. In contrast, new codes emerged from the examination of the texts. All codes have been directly inserted in the transcripts of the interviews, which appear in Appendix 2. To enhance comprehension, the in-vivo codes are highlighted and a reference to their category (pattern) is made thanks to abbreviations defined in Table 6 (Coding Agenda) in chapter 3.4.6. Furthermore, a table summarizing all in-vivo codes, pattern codes and themes is provided in Appendix 3.

“C5: Lack of Sociality”, or the idea of avoiding social interaction during shopping, was never mentioned by any of the participants. On the contrary, in one case, a consumer

really appreciated when she and her friends ordered food online together and had it delivered to the same place to have lunch together. As explained by Chuang-Mu, “[...] *some of the students really like to spend a lot of time with roommates and with food delivery, the possibility to have food delivered and to eat together is convenient.*” (Interviewee 2). Interestingly, this assumption shows how online consumption and purchases can, in fact, bring people together in the physical world and improve their social interactions.

“C7: Adventure / Exploration” only totalized 4 codes. It seems that buying food online is not seen as an adventure, in contrast to shopping for durable items such as clothes or electronics. Ordering food is done when consumers need it, not when they are looking for entertainment. This can be illustrated by the assumption of Fang, who said “*In the evening I would maybe do online shopping but more for durable like if I’m just bored, I can go online and buy some shoes. For groceries, the thing is that when you buy it, you will get it within an hour. If I don’t use it, it will become stale.*” (Interviewee 5). Ordering food is then more likely to happen at a moment when consumers have to satisfy their basic need to eat, not when they are bored.

Only 3 codes tallied with “C9: Idea”, all emerging from the analysis of one single interview. Buying food online provided new ideas of meals for one of the participants but was not mentioned as such by the others who already have their food preferences when it comes to online grocery shopping or meal delivery.

After having reviewed all interviews, “C2: Convenience” was the most used code with 175 occurrences out of 518 codes in total, which corresponded to 34% of the codes. After the assumptions classified under “Convenience” were read again, it appeared that lots of them were associated with time. Indeed, when proceeding to the first coding exercise the advantage of saving time was interpreted as a convenient and comfortable manner to do shopping. However, due to their numerous repetitions, it was decided that all codes referring to timely aspects (i.e. fast delivery deadline, quickness, saving time) were taken out of “C2: Convenience” and moved in another new category “C14: Time Saving”. “C2: Convenience” was then only used for items related to the comfortable way of buying food online (i.e. convenient, without going out, delivery at your door). After the separation, “C2: Convenience” accounted for 98 codes, against 77 for “C14: Time Saving”. Interestingly, even the single words “convenient” or “convenience” appeared 39 times.

As an example, when asking why it was better to buy food online rather than at the supermarket, Fang simply answered “*Convenience. [...] Convenience. There is no other reason. It’s really not cheaper or faster, it’s just more convenient.*” (Interviewee 5). On the other hand, to give an idea of how fast the delivery of food can be when ordering online, Chan explained,

“For the groceries, the range is probably like between 1 hour and 15 minutes to 30 minutes so there’s really not that much differentiation. You are going to get it pretty quickly. They’re used to give you the estimates of when you are going to get it. They usually don’t go above like 1 hour and 30 minutes.” (Interviewee 4).

Furthermore, a second new category “C12: Security” emerged from the examination. Indeed, each of the participants emitted concerns about the quality and safety of the food they ordered and ate. In terms of frequency, this code even appeared to be the third most used during the analysis, with 56 codes. One of the consumers, An, expressed her concerns by saying,

“If you don’t know the brand you are worried about the quality. [...] And it is food, you have to eat it. It’s not like clothes or something else to use. You have to eat it it’s for the health. So, you have to be very careful.” (Interviewee 1).

This sentence clearly highlights the differentiation Chinese customers make between purchasing durables or products they have to ingest in their bodies.

The third new category is “C13: Lifestyle”. When asked about their motivations for buying food online, some participants simply related to the normality of this process and to the fact that it is part of the lifestyle they have. This was the case of Chan. When asked if he was ordering all his groceries online or if he was still going to the supermarket, he answered “*Me personally, pretty much 100% with mobile. I mean, why should I still go to the supermarket if I can order everything and have it delivered at my place?*” (Interviewee 4). Later, he added, “*It suits to the lifestyle of people here.*” (Interviewee 4). The repetition of similar comments supported the creation of this new online shopping motivation.

To sum up and for reasons of simplification, Table 7 lists only the categories (pattern coding) and their frequency of apparition. “C2: Convenience” remains in first place, with

98 appearances. It is followed by the new item “C14: Time Saving”. “C12: Security”, which expresses the guarantee for consumers of benefitting from better security and higher quality products in the online market, “C3: Selection”, “C13: Lifestyle”, “C11: Authority / Status”, and “C4: Information Availability” are very close to each other with respectively 56, 53, 51, 46 and 40 entries. The motives that were less mentioned by the consumers were “C1: Cost Saving”, “C8: Social”, “C6: Customized Products / Services” and “C10: Value”, with respectively 28, 26, 19, and 17 references. Finally, as stated above, two categories, namely “C7: Adventure / Exploration” and “C9: Idea”, were only used 4 and 3 times, whereas “C5: Lack of Sociality” did not appear during the whole analysis.

Code	Category	Sum
2	Convenience	98 codes
14	Time Saving	77 codes
12	Security	56 codes
3	Selection	53 codes
13	Lifestyle	51 codes
11	Authority / Status	46 codes
4	Information Availability	40 codes
1	Cost Saving	28 codes
8	Social	26 codes
6	Customized Products / Services	19 codes
10	Value	17 codes
7	Adventure / Exploration	4 codes
9	Idea	3 codes
5	Lack of Sociality	0 code
Total		518 codes

Table 7: Findings of the Coding Process

As previously explained in chapter 3.4.6., at the end of the second coding cycle the goal of the analysis was to group the patterns into categories, namely into utilitarian and hedonic motivations. Since three new categories emerged from the investigation, it is necessary first to define which kind of motivation they belong to.

According to the coding processes, “C12: Security” deals with the fact that consumers feel safer when buying food online because they can verify its reliability thanks to the information of other consumers or pictures. The reviews, which are not available in the physical market, provide a feeling of security regarding the health and quality standards of consumers. Therefore, online consumers driven by the motivation “Security” purchase having a goal in mind, which is to buy good quality products. This goal-oriented approach signifies that “C12: Security” is a utilitarian value.

“C13: Lifestyle” refers to the “normal-way-of-doing”, or the normal habit of doing grocery shopping or using meal delivery services online. It has to do with the experience of the users. It is consequently by definition a hedonic motivation.

“C14: Time Saving”, arising from the functional motive “C2: Convenience”, refers to the fact that consumers enjoy online food shopping because they can save time. It is quicker to buy online than go to the physical store. By not investing time in going to the supermarket, they have more time for other leisure activities or to work. Therefore, they can use their time in a more efficient manner. “C14: Time Saving” belongs to the category of utilitarian motives.

Now that all categories have been classified into functional or non-functional motives, it is acceptable to decide if Chinese consumers are driven by utilitarian or hedonic motivations when buying food online. To conclude, in this study, codes corresponding to utilitarian values represent 72% of all codes of the research, whereas it is 28% for hedonic motives. As illustrated in Figure 6, it is mainly for utilitarian reasons that the participants of this study buy groceries or order meals online. The results would be somewhat similar if the individual situations had been presented. Functional factors would account for 66% and 68% of the motivation for buying food online for the interviewees 4 and 6 (Chan and Bao). It would even reach 70% for the two first participants (An and Chuang-Mu), 78% for the interviewee 5 (Fang) and 87% for the 3rd participant (Kuan-Ti).

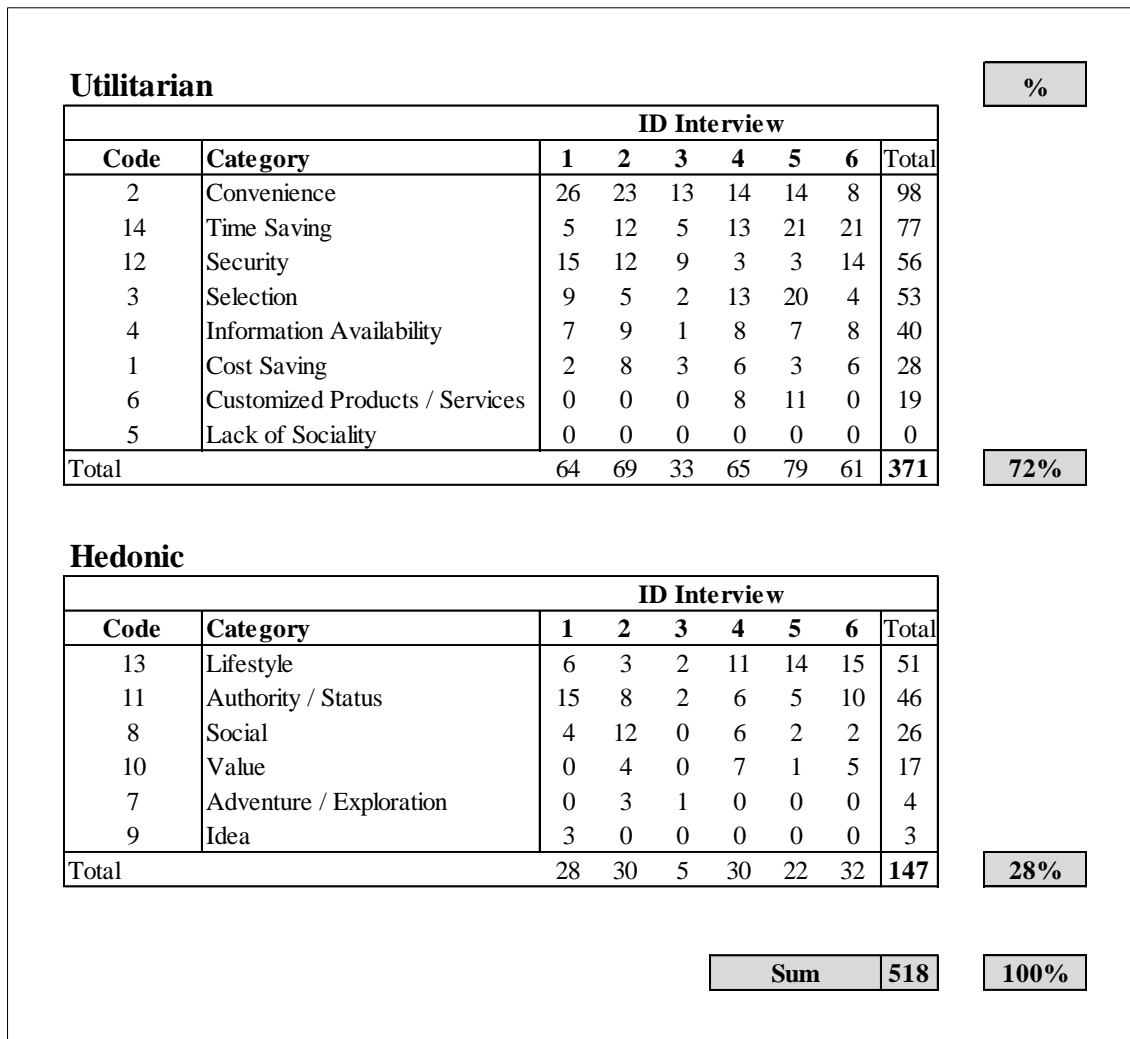


Figure 6: Utilitarian vs. Hedonic Motivations of Chinese Consumers

4.2.2. Portraits

After the overall findings of the interviews have been presented, this part suggests having a closer look at participants' interpretations of their own worlds. The online grocery or meal delivery shopping processes are described from the perspective of each of the individuals to gain more understanding of their own experience. In the preamble, it can already be mentioned that "Convenience" is the main motivation for buying food online for four of the participants, whereas it is "Time Saving" for the two others. In the meantime, "Security" appears among the three most important motivations for four consumers of this study. The individual pattern codes, classified in order of importance for each of the participants, are provided in Appendix 4. Furthermore, in presenting the individuals below, shopping motivations appear in a specific order, starting with the most

important ones. Quotations and paraphrases help to understand the individuals' opinions. According to APA rules, quotations of 40 words or more are placed in a quotation block to help the reader (American Psychological Association Style Blog, 2018).

An, Cautious Cooking

Aged 29 and having completed a Bachelor's degree, An is working in an office in Shanghai. She has been using online shopping for a number of years, including for groceries. She does not really use online meal delivery services as she prefers to go to eat outside in a shop or a store for lunch. However, she likes to cook in the evening and that is why she has to buy groceries. She mentions the factor "Convenience" as the most important reason for buying food online. As she declares already at the beginning of the interview,

"[...] you don't need to go outside anymore to buy food. There are a lot of shops on Taobao. You can buy anything. There is everything you need, so it's convenient. It feels more and more convenient to buy things on Internet because you can find anything. [...] There is everything you want, really. It's so convenient and it doesn't take a lot of time! This is the most important reason. It's more efficient."
(Interviewee 1).

This already reveals the main motivation for online grocery shopping for this consumer, the efficient aspect of it. As a reminder, according to the literature, efficiency corresponds to utilitarian motivations. Another good example of the convenient aspect of online shopping stressed by An is the fact that she can order food anywhere she wants, *"[...] at home, at my office, on my way home, on the bus, in the metro... yeah, everywhere."* (Interviewee 1). Furthermore, each order will be directly delivered at the door of her apartment, so that she does not even need to go outside anymore, *"[...] the delivery is convenient you don't need to carry heavy bags if you buy a lot of things. It's delivered at your place or at your office, you can choose. [...] they will deliver your order directly at your door."* (Interviewee 1). Also, the order can be completed at any time, *"It just depends what I am doing and what I want to have at this moment."* (Interviewee 1), says An about the appropriate time for her to buy online groceries.

As a second main reason for purchasing food online, An mentioned several times aspects interpreted as “Authority / Status” motivations. As she explains,

“[...] I like to feel comfortable when I use a website. [...] It needs to be clear, easy. It must be easy to find the products because you don’t want to search too long if you know what you want. If it is too complicated I prefer to leave it and use another one.” (Interviewee 1).

This extract accentuates the relevance for the participant of choosing a platform on her own and simply and freely switching to another one if she wants to. In addition to selecting which platform to use and which kind of food she likes, she enjoys trying new food and having the power to decide if she will repeat the purchase of this article in the future or not. *“I have to try to know if it is good. I will decide if it is a good brand. And if it’s good I can buy more often in the future. [...] In the end, I will see if I like it or not.”* (Interviewee 1) is the participant’s declaration that supports the importance for her of making her own decisions when buying food online.

Just as important as the previous motivation, “Security” was mentioned several times by An. With online grocery shopping, she can buy brands that she knows, on reliable websites that she has already used several times. Furthermore, she can find the best quality on the web. As she announces, *“[...] I mostly buy the brands that I know. I know they are good. It’s safer.”* (Interviewee 1). However, when she is not sure about the quality of a foodstuff, she still prefers to go to the supermarket to avoid any food contamination.

“If you don’t know the brand you are worried about the quality. [...] Sometimes on the website they show good pictures but maybe when you see the delivery it is not so good as what you saw on Internet. And it is food, you have to eat it. [...] You have to eat it, it’s for the health. So, you have to be very careful.” (Interviewee 1).

This revelation shows how information or pictures on a website do not always reassure consumers and that they may be afraid of fraudulent practices. Still, pictures are relevant in an online store. When asked about her preferences in terms of web design, she said *“Not a lot of colors so that it’s more clear. Otherwise it’s confusing. And with a lot of pictures it’s better because you want to see the food very well and see if it’s your taste or not, if it’s cooked as you like. Yes, this is really important to have good pictures.”*

(Interviewee 1). Still, An believes that fruits and vegetables are fresher when bought at the supermarket. Furthermore, she often prefers to see them before buying them. Regarding her taste, even if she mostly buys Chinese food, she sometimes consumes some Western specialties, like cheese for example. She particularly appreciates finding new cooking ideas on the web, as she explains,

“It feels more and more convenient to buy things on the Internet because you can find anything. And new things. For example, today if I don’t know what food to eat I can look there and find ideas. Or, if I know what I want but I don’t know where to find it I can go on Taobao and I will look for it. There is everything you want.”

(Interviewee 1).

For this consumer, the Internet provides a wide assortment of products that are all available at one single place.

To summarize, it can be said that An enjoys the benefits of ordering food online whenever she wants and having it delivered at her door, but she still uses the traditional way of going to the supermarket when she feels insecure about some items. The broad range on offer on the web helps her to find new ideas and to consume foreign products. However, she mostly uses the platforms that she knows and orders the brands that she trusts.

Chuang-Mu, Young and Busy

Chuang-Mu is 22 years old. She just received her Bachelor’s degree in Information Technology and is now doing an internship in an office located in the business area of Shanghai. Chuang-Mu is the youngest participant in the study. She is not a keen cook, that is why she prefers to order food for lunch. For her, ordering meals online means having more time to spend with friends. As with most Chinese meal delivery consumers, she uses the two popular apps Ele.me and Meituan.

The first motivation for Chuang-Mu to use online meal delivery services is the convenience of it. About the time she was still studying and living on the campus of the university, she says,

“[...] it’s very convenient to have delivery food for breakfast. For lunch sometimes, the canteen is so crowded, you know, it’s full of people, and it’s just nice that you can stay in your dorm, you can organize delivered food with your roommates, cozy... you know, you don’t need to go out, it’s just convenient.” (Interviewee 2).

According to her words, ordering food online avoids having to go to the canteen, where it is crowded and certainly hard to find a place to sit. As she does not appreciate cooking, she does not use online grocery shopping. However, she knows about some friends who do it and comments *“My friends they prefer to order grocery online too because it’s very easy, convenient, and you don’t need to go in the city and carry your stuff, you know. They deliver it at your place for nearly nothing. [...] Very convenient. You don’t need to go to the market.”* (Interviewee 2). When asked if she was using another device than her mobile to order meals online, she was surprised *“Of course mobile! I don’t think there is anyone ordering from computer, come on! No, really, I wouldn’t see anyone ordering from computer. That would be quite interesting to see that!”* (Interviewee 2). According to her words, ordering with a mobile is clearly linked to convenient shopping.

“[...] you can order whenever you want and also from everywhere. I mean you don’t need to be especially at the office in front of your computer to make an order. With your mobile it doesn’t matter. You can be in the bus in the morning, at home, in a store... it doesn’t matter. You feel like you need to order something then you just do it.” (Interviewee 2).

Now Chuang-Mu is working. Although she agrees with the fact that going out to have lunch with some colleagues is nice, she admits using online delivery services when she lacks time. As she declares, *“[...] when the workload is too much, or we don’t have so much time, we would order food.”* (Interviewee 2). She emphasizes the rapidity of the consumer process thanks to short delivery deadlines.

“I would say, you know, if it’s meal delivery, well, normally very quick like less than 1 hour. If it’s for grocery shopping, then just the same day. For example, if you order in the morning you expect to be delivered in the evening, unless you can wait because it’s not urgent. But well normally when you order something you need it now, right?” (Interviewee 2).

This last comment shows how spontaneous food orders can be for Chuang-Mu.

Like other participants, Chuang-Mu is also worried about the quality of the food. She relies highly on comments and reviews of other users before placing an order. Chuang-Mu explains,

“A lot of ratings from the users are important. The comments... And the most important to say here is that there are pictures with every comment. [...] So that you can see how it is. Straightforward from the user how the food is like, whether it’s like your expectations, is it for your taste.” (Interviewee 2).

She focuses attention on the importance of pictures,

“You know, if you have a lot of users saying something then you believe them. And like I said, they have pictures, so you can directly check what they say. It doesn’t really matter if it’s a recommendation from a friend or not actually. The description and picture are more important. Their comments have a lot of power.” (Interviewee 2).

It is clear that for this participant it does not matter if she receives feedback from strangers or relatives. The mass of the sources has more weight than her relationship with them. To sum up this point, the concerns of Chuang-Mu regarding the quality and security of the foodstuffs can be easily understood by the following.

“[...] the food industry in China is really interesting. Sometimes tricky. You know sometimes it’s difficult for us as well to know if food is good or not, if the companies do good job or not. I think that’s why we started to always comment and so. We don’t always trust the companies, so we comment it and want to help others. If it’s good food we want to share it, if it’s not good we also want to say it so that others don’t buy it you know.” (Interviewee 2).

It can be said that there is a kind of solidarity among online consumers when seeing these words.

Another important factor for Chuang-Mu when buying food online is that she can benefit from cheaper prices and discounts, as she says *“[...] if you order food with your friends you will get a discount or if you order food always on the same website they will give you discount for the numerous orders. But this won’t happen if you go to real stores, they give you no discounts.”* (Interviewee 2). Discounts are an advantage for her when ordering

meals online compared to having lunch at physical places. It is then important for her to have the possibility to look for special offers when browsing on a website. *“You can also use filters and look for the food that are on sale, it is cheaper.”*. (Interviewee 2).

Whether while studying or working as an intern, ordering food online is very convenient for Chuang-Mu. She and her friends or colleagues can enjoy a ready-made lunch that they can share together at the place of their choice while benefiting from better prices. By acting this way, they avoid going out to crowded places to eat. Transparency is important because Chuang-Mu is worried about the quality of the food she consumes. However, thanks to the reviews and pictures shared by other users, she can examine the dishes and improve her confidence before placing an order on a website.

Kuan-Ti, The Analyst

Kuan-Ti, born in 1983, is working as a Financial Analyst. He has been ordering food online for more than four years. Interestingly, despite being Chinese he prefers Western and Japanese food. Thanks to the numerous offers available on the web, he can easily find the kind of food he desires. When doing online shopping, he wants to go straight to the point and be efficient. However, the main reason he orders food online is the same as for the two previous participants, it is because it is convenient. When answering the first question of the interview regarding the principal reason for him to order food online, he says *“It’s very convenient if you order food online. Maybe after 30 or 35 minutes the food will be delivered directly to your place. That’s quite easy and convenient.”* (Interviewee 3). Convenience and time-saving aspects appeared several times during the interviews, as for example *“I can save time. You know, it’s quicker because you can work or do your stuff at home and don’t need to worry about going out to supermarket.”* (Interviewee 3). Indeed, it makes more sense for Kuan-Ti to invest his time in activities that are more important to him than grocery shopping.

Three to four times a week Kuan-Ti orders ready-made food for his lunch break. The second most important motivation for him is the quality of the products. As he said, *“I’m kind of on a heavy diet. So, I would prefer food that is healthy and doesn’t hurt my stomach. When I order food for home it should be fresh and healthy. And also when I’m at the office and I order a meal for lunch I look that it is good and healthy.”* (Interviewee

3). However, he says that pictures on a website do not influence his trust in the food because sometimes vendors use fake ones. If pictures are not important in the design of the platforms, other aspects are relevant. He mentions, *“I think it must be easy to use. It should be convenient: open the application, choose food and order. It must be convenient for me. I don’t want to think “where is the button”, “where is the food” etcetera. The color doesn’t matter.”* (Interviewee 3). This assumption highlights the functional motivation for Kuan-Ti to use online food ordering. Indeed, among all of the participants, he is the one that is the most influenced by utilitarian motives when purchasing food online.

Kuan-Ti is also aware of having access to better prices online. First, product prices are cheaper. Second, the cost of the delivery is very low, as he states *“[...] delivery fee is very cheap, you know, very low in China. That’s why we choose it. Delivery fee is sometimes 5 RMB, it’s affordable right?”* (Interviewee 3). These advantages seem to encourage him to pay to have food delivered at his place rather than to invest his time in going to the city and supermarkets to do grocery shopping, an understandable attitude for a financial analyst.

Chan, Urban Lifestyle

Aged 30 and working as a Communication Manager, Chan is the fourth participant in the research. He completed a Master’s degree in Management, worked abroad for some years and moved back to Shanghai some months ago. He has been using his mobile phone for grocery shopping since getting back to China and he is using it for pretty much all he has to have in his kitchen. As for most of the food buyers, Tmall and JD.com allow him to find everything he needs.

“The convenience of using mobile shopping is great.” (Interviewee 4). Like three other participants, Chan enjoys the convenience of buying food online. Thanks to his mobile, he can order food whenever he wants, from wherever he is. This is particularly interesting when he is working late in the evening. As said by him simply, *“Why should I still go to the supermarket if I can order everything and have it delivered at my place.”* (Interviewee 4). Ordering food from his mobile and having it delivered after work is convenient.

As seen at the beginning of the analysis, “Convenience” is highly linked to “Time Saving” benefits. Chan mentions expecting a food order to be delivered some hours only after being placed. “[...] sometimes when I get home after work if I see that I need something to cook I will order it right at that moment because usually it’s so quick to be delivered that you don’t have to think about that in advance.” (Interviewee 4). Furthermore, not only is a fast delivery service important for Chan but also a fast ordering process. When asked about the design of the website, he says “I don’t really care about that. In the end, all the apps have kind of the same functions and design. It doesn’t really matter as soon as I can find what I want and order quickly.” (Interviewee 4). This assumption fosters the need for the participant to benefit from a quick and efficient food ordering process to reach his purchasing goals.

As important as “Time Saving”, another motivation for Chan is the “Selection”, or the wide assortment available on the Internet. “That’s another thing that is essential.” (Interviewee 4), he says about the possibility of having access to more choice and more varieties online. A wide range of products as well as personalized offers thanks to algorithms and detection of the location of his mobile allow him to order different kind of food depending on where he is located in Shanghai. He explains,

“It is going to depend on your area and that goes with the groceries as well. If you are, let’s say, like in the Gubei Districts, there are a lot of Japanese expats, so some are Japanese restaurants and Japanese shopping malls. The selection would be more towards the Japanese food there.” (Interviewee 4).

Later, he adds “I will order whatever food I want to eat at the moment regarding the offers. If I am at home I like to have sometimes Chinese food, sometimes Western.” (Interviewee 4). Because he lived abroad for some time, he enjoys foreign as well as Chinese cooking.

“Essentially, it’s just convenient and everyone does it. Whether at work or for home.” (Interviewee 4). Another relevant characteristic of the behavior of Chan is the feeling of “normal-way-of-doing” he experiences when consuming online. For him, using his mobile to purchase items, whether for food or other kinds of products, is simply the normal and best way to enjoy life in the busy city of Shanghai. As he asserts,

“[...] the younger generation, they really don’t have that much time to cook while working, so it’s much easier to just order food. This is kind of Shanghai, Beijing, Shenzhen lifestyles.” (Interviewee 4).

At the end of the interview, Chan says *“Why wouldn’t you do it? It’s cheap. It’s convenient. It suits to the lifestyle people here have.”* (Interviewee 4). He also mentions the advantage of using his mobile to pay for nearly all the things he usually buys. *“I literally personally haven’t touched cash in like two months.”* (Interviewee 4), he says to emphasize mobile payments applications and their widespread use in the biggest cities in China. Because he lived abroad, mainly in Great Britain and in Switzerland, Chan can compare different national systems and is aware of the advanced technology he benefits from in China.

“It’s very different from Switzerland where you really still use both options to go to Migros or make an order online, but in this case you have to plan in advance the delivery if you order on the website, right? [...] I used to live [in London] for a couple of months and there are two grocery online websites, but they are still at first stage level. It’s not so convenient as in China.” (Interviewee 4).

Since Chan is using the two most popular applications for online groceries in China, web design does not have any influence on his purchase intention, as he states *“I don’t really care about that. In the end, all the apps have kind of the same functions and design. It doesn’t really matter as soon as I can find what I want and order quickly.”* (Interviewee 4). However, high-quality pictures along with reviews of other users and price advantages are relevant for the purchase decision. They are *“the most important things that will influence my decision to order or not”* (Interviewee 4), according to Chan’s words. Indeed, security and quality concerns are also in his mind when buying food. *“You just have to be careful what you buy. But usually before you order something you can see the comments of the other consumers who bought it, so it makes it easier to see if it’s good quality food or not.”* (Interviewee 4). Furthermore, he explains that consumers are even encouraged to give feedback on their orders. *“In most applications, there are incentives for people to review a product and put pictures of the product. If you do that, you will get bonus points that can go back into whatever you purchase.”* (Interviewee 4). Indeed, discounts and cheaper prices are also important to him. *“If you’re buying through the applications, they take in charge the delivery charges, and also you can collect points*

and have little discounts through memberships. Actually, that's not something you're going to get at markets." (Interviewee 4). According to his words, purchasing online offers him financial advantages that he would not receive if he was shopping in physical stores.

Convenience, wide selection, time-saving benefits, and simply adapting to the lifestyle of Shanghai are the most important motivations for Chan to order food online. Sometimes going home late in the evening, he enjoys not having to go to the supermarket after work and using his mobile to purchase the food he needs. Furthermore, he can rely on other consumers' reviews and examine pictures before deciding which wares he is going to buy. On the top of that, he has access to better prices than in physical stores.

Fang, The Working Woman

Fang is certainly the busiest working woman of the study. Aged 28, she is employed as a Marketing Manager for a global brand whose offices are located in Shanghai. Overseeing a whole department, with a lot of responsibilities, she sometimes works long hours and lacks time to go shopping. Therefore, like some of her colleagues, she particularly appreciates ordering food on her mobile during commuting or at the office.

"In general, in the bigger cities in China, people work longer hours, then the commute is longer. For example, when I leave the office at 7:00 PM, if I still have to do grocery shopping during the day, it would be 10:00 before I can finish having dinner. Normally, what people do is they tend to buy things when they're commuting or before they get off work, so by the time they get home, they will have it delivered." (Interviewee 5).

The last part of this affirmation highlights the biggest motivation for Fang to buy food online, the time-saving advantages, according to the coding analysis. Indeed, Fang seems to live in an area of Shanghai where grocery deliveries have been very well developed. When asked if she was expecting same-day delivery for her food orders, she answered,

"It's usually within two hours. [...] of course, they have to limit the areas we can buy things from. Let's say it's below five kilometers, then they have a team who can pick it up from wherever your location is. That's usually within an hour. Maximum,

under two hours. For closer areas, it can be with you in 30 minutes.” (Interviewee 5).

It looks like same-day delivery is not enough in her district. Online orders have to be delivered almost instantaneously. *“You can take out your phone and buy anything anytime. You can also do grocery shopping when you’re sitting in a meeting when people are not looking. It’s not tied to your PC.”* (Interviewee 5), says the working woman. Because delivery deadlines are so short in her area, she tends to place orders during the day, right before consumption.

“It’s most of the time during the day, but not at home in the evening. In the evening I would maybe do online shopping but more for durables like if I’m just bored, I can go online and buy some shoes. For groceries the thing is that when you buy it, you will get it within an hour. If I don’t use it, it will become stale.” (Interviewee 5).

She accentuates the point on freshness, *“Fresh ingredients and ready-made meals are always ordered right before consumption. You never order that a day in advance, because you cannot. That’s simply not an option.”* (Interviewee 5).

As Fang orders all of her groceries with her mobile, she also needs fresh ingredients such as fruit, vegetables, meat, or fish. The second advantage for her when buying online is the product selection available on the web. *“I order anything. [...] there’s basically any food. As long as within two or three kilometers circle, there is something that you can always get into.”* (Interviewee 5). She can enjoy local as well as foreign food. *“Food availability is very, very widespread. That’s not only Chinese food, it’s any food. It can also be pizza, burgers, chicken wings. It could also be Chinese food or soup. Basically, whatever you like.”* (Interviewee 5). Furthermore, according to the time of the day, websites will suggest different offers, as she explains,

“It also gives you recommendations based on the time of the day. [...] for the morning, they prioritize breakfast in stores. There’s a lot of breakfast providers in the morning that they offer a different set of menus. [...] During lunchtime, they do another set. [...] It’s adapting to the time of day to optimize for your needs.” (Interviewee 5).

According to the coding analysis, after “Time Saving” and “Selection”, “Convenience” appears as the third most important reason for Fang to buy food online. Indeed, this aspect was clearly stated by the participant at the beginning of the interview, “*Convenience. [...] Convenience. There’s no other reason. [...] It’s just more convenient.*” (Interviewee 5). For reasons already explained above, it is clear that mobile food purchase is more appropriate to the rhythm and lifestyle Fang has in Shanghai than doing groceries shopping in the city after a long day of work. Furthermore, she mentions that ordering ready-made lunch is an advantage when the weather gets too hot in China. She does not need to go outside and suffer from the heat.

Fang also uses mobile shopping simply as the normal way of consuming. “*It didn’t take a while until I got used to everything. And once you get used to the system, it’s very easy to stick into the system.*” (Interviewee 5). She assumes. “*I think that’s very common.*”. (Interviewee 5). Regarding the meal delivery trends in China, she claims “*Basically, every single restaurant in the whole country can deliver. If there’s one restaurant that doesn’t deliver, it’s seen as a very weird behavior.*” (Interviewee 5). This emphasizes how this participant is used to having access to advanced technology in her everyday life in Shanghai. Using both groceries shopping and meal delivery services through online platforms is, according to Fang, “*a normal consumption model*” (Interviewee 5).

Not seeing any further advantage in going to the supermarket, Fang is buying all of her groceries with her mobile, as she stresses “*[...] I’m not going there anymore. It’s really not needed for me to visit the store to get anything I want from the store. That’s the basic logic.*” (Interviewee 5).

Bao, The Digital Buyer

After Fang, Bao is the other working man of the research. 30 years old, he is employed as a Project Manager for an international company. Besides working for a company, he has his own business, so he endures long days of work combining many professional activities. He comes from China but also has some experience living abroad. He is a native speaker of both Chinese and French. Since French was also the mother tongue of the interviewer, the survey with Bao was conducted in this language. All the quotations or paraphrases that appear in the description of the participant below have been translated

from French into English by the author. Although this way of interpreting from the original speech can be technically attributed to paraphrases, quotation format is still used to represent the words of the participant, as recommended by the APA rules (APA Style Blog, 2018). According to these again, the original of the quotation can be inserted after the translation, when necessary. This is particularly interesting when an analysis focuses on the words of the individuals, which is the case in this study that used in-vivo coding as a first coding cycle for the analytic approach.

Like other interviewees in this research, Bao uses the two well-known applications Tmall and JD.com to get his groceries online. He is used to buying any kind of product with his mobile since he employs online shopping for pretty much everything he needs. Doing the shopping with his mobile offers the crucial advantage for him to spare the time he would need to go to the supermarket and invest it in other activities, as he says *“If I order with the application, I can do it whenever I want, wherever I want. I’m more likely to invest time in my job or in my married life than to do my groceries.”* (Interviewee 6). *“I don’t need to spend time to rummage around in the supermarket. It’s way easier online.”* (Interviewee 6), he adds. Furthermore, when first asked why he preferred to order online rather than going out, he clearly answered that it is because of *“the pace of life”* [*“le rythme de vie”*] (Interviewee 6) in Shanghai. Because he combines a professional activity as an employee of a company with an independent project, his days are quite long. As he finishes working pretty late in the evening, he explains *“It’s really impossible for me to go to the supermarket, I don’t have time.”* (Interviewee 6). Bao uses online groceries or meal ordering services on a daily basis, for Chinese food as well as for Western specialties. Having lived in France for some years, he enjoys the fact that he can buy cheese as well as wine through mobile applications. Also, quick delivery deadlines are the key to using mobile shopping for Bao. *“In China, if I place an order today, it will be delivered tomorrow. If I order in the morning, it will even be delivered in the afternoon or in less than one hour if I want to. [...] It’s quick and good quality.”* (Interviewee 6). Regarding his first principal motive, he finishes by commenting the online grocery system in China, *“We’re at an advanced stage. It enables us to concentrate on other things because when you can save time on groceries you can invest it somewhere else.”* (Interviewee 6).

For Bao, “Lifestyle” represents the second motivation to order food online. Indeed, he is used to mobile shopping and payment since he buys nearly everything with his smartphone. *“We can do everything online. [...] With the mobile phone, we can really do everything, so it’s normal that a lot of people live their daily life online and do everything with their mobile. I am part of this group of people.”* (Interviewee 6), he says. He further comments, *“I am shopping online most of the time, also for my clothes, shoes, etcetera.”* (Interviewee 6). He has been using online grocery shopping for more than five years. *“It is a really well-developed system that works and that is very convenient.”* (Interviewee 6). Thanks to the most used applications Tmall and JD.com he can *“buy everything on these platforms”*. (Interviewee 6). He admits to using a computer sometimes but that is rather uncommon. It only offers him the advantage of making a better price comparison because he can open many shop windows on one screen at the same time. However, it only happens if he has his computer with him, which is not that often.

Nearly as important as “Lifestyle”, “Security” plays a significant role in choosing online shopping for Bao. He uses mobile applications because he can find premium products and therefore have access to high-quality foodstuffs. He feels secure about using the two well-known applications mentioned earlier because there he can buy good quality food that tastes good, according to his cooking preferences. With time, he knows which items he usually wants to order. Anyway, if he wants to try something new he will have a look at the reviews before buying it.

“That’s an obligation for me before placing any order, unless I received a recommendation from my girlfriend or from any other relative. The comments represent the user experience quite well. Because in China the population scale is pretty big, for some items there are often more than 10,000 comments. Products are classified on a scale of one to five stars. I can have a look at the bad experiences, the one with one star, and see why this product is not good.” (Interviewee 6).

In addition to the comments, Bao also wants to see pictures. *“I anyway don’t order an item if there are not enough pictures because I cannot see the product and I don’t want to take risks.”* (Interviewee 6). However, for Bao, buying premium products is a good strategy to avoid risky transactions, as he states *“I buy premium products, so they are not the cheapest, for sure. However, at least they are less risky, from the point of view of the quality and also of their taste.”* (Interviewee 6).

To a lesser extent, another motivation that was highlighted during the interview with Bao was the “Authority” value. Ordering online makes him feel more independent, as he says, *“I can buy whatever I want.”* (Interviewee 6). He makes his own choices of platforms he wants to use. Furthermore, he chooses food with high-quality standards and takes time to investigate the products by reading reviews or checking pictures in order to make his own buying decisions.

He adds that benefiting from cheaper prices is also a motive for him. Moreover, he can cumulate points, receive discounts and be part of loyalty programs. *“You don’t have all of this at the supermarket.”* (Interviewee 6), he explains.

5. Conclusion

Chinese consumers are extremely reliant on online shopping for all kinds of purchases in their daily life. In particular, online grocery shopping and meal delivery services have continually grown in popularity among Chinese middle-class buyers over the past years. While literature showed the existence of theories concerning online consumer behavior, specific patterns of Chinese consumers, as well as online shopping motivations, a gap existed regarding the specific motivations of Chinese rising middle-class to purchase food in the online marketplace. The findings of this study highlighted interesting facts about the online food industry in China and the motivations of its consumers. Therefore, it can be stated that the research question was answered and that the three objectives of this study were achieved.

This chapter first summarizes the findings and then discusses how they relate to the existing literature. Furthermore, a new framework of online shopping motivations is suggested. As for any kind of research, the limitations of this study are explained in chapter 5.2. Then, because this research aims to support Swiss companies willing to sell products in the Chinese online food market, some practical recommendations for Swiss companies are given in chapter 5.3. Finally, directions for future research are suggested in the last part of this section.

5.1. Discussion

5.1.1. Summary of the Findings

Findings of the secondary research showed that there are 731 million active Internet users in China, which corresponds to a penetration rate of 53.2%. In Shanghai, one of the biggest inhabited cities in China, this proportion even reaches 74.1%. Most of the Chinese Internet users, 91.5%, connect to the web with their mobile. Half of the online population is made up of young citizens, aged between 20 and 39. Furthermore, 63.5% of the users possess a secondary education diploma. Moreover, more than 2/3 of netizens engage in online shopping. The digital system, the degree of digitization of the industries and the focus of the government in investing in digital technologies to boost its competitiveness on the global market have enhanced e-commerce in all kind of sectors in China. Furthermore, the fact that mobile phones became an important part of a consumer's daily

life contributed to the growth of the online food industry. Thanks to their smartphones, Chinese consumers can order groceries or ready-made meals in only few clicks, at whatever time they want, from wherever they are. Sophisticated algorithms and logistic timeliness allow providers of food to suggest personalized offers to the users and to deliver their orders in a very short time. In Shanghai, the technology and the system are so innovative that in some areas of the city deliveries can be made in hours, which makes mobile grocery shopping very convenient and much faster than going out to the supermarket.

Primary research presented evidence about the motivations of Chinese consumers to buy food online. According to the findings, the first reason Chinese buyers do online grocery shopping is because it is convenient. They do not need to go out in crowded places or during hot days and can simply order whatever they need from home, the office or during commuting. The second motivation for them is that it is more time efficient to order online. Indeed, shopping in a few clicks is way quicker than going out to the market. Furthermore, delivery deadlines are very short since Shanghai inhabitants can benefit from same-day delivery for their groceries. They do not need to plan their purchases in advance and can be very spontaneous. The third motivation for Chinese online buyers is that online they feel more secure about the products they buy. They can look for information and the opinions of other users, which they would not have at the supermarket. Also relevant is the fact that a bigger product selection is available online than in physical stores. Another reason for Chinese citizens to do online shopping is simply because it is just the accepted way of doing, or, the *way of living*. New technologies and mobile usage are widely spread in Shanghai and the inhabitants are just used to using their mobile for everything in their daily life, whether for shopping, communicating with friends, ordering a taxi or paying the bills. Indeed, in the case of this research, every participant was using its mobile, whether for grocery shopping or for meal-delivery services. The market is mainly dominated by Alibaba, Tencent, and JD.com, who offer applications for groceries as well as for meal-delivery services. Hence, the most common apps used by Chinese consumers are Tmall (Tencent), JD.com, Ele.me (Alibaba), and Meituan Waimai (Tencent).

5.1.2. Relation to the Literature

The statistics issued by the Chinese government confirm the assertion of Allred et al. (2006) who stated that online consumers are younger, better educated and have a higher “computer literacy”. The findings of the qualitative research show that Chinese online buyers of food tend to be more rational than emotional. They want to purchase food in an efficient manner. These findings confirm those of Wolfinbarger and Gilly (2000), Overby and Lee (2006) and Gong et al. (2013) who found out that utilitarian motivation is the main reason why people shop online. It is interesting to notice that the rational aspects overcome the emotional even when it is about experience products, such as food and beverages. Indeed, one could think that consumers would like to see, touch or smell the ingredients before buying it, as explained by Childers et al. (2001). Consequently, the findings contradict the results of Topaloglu (2012, p. 15) who conducted a study in Turkey and declared that online consumers preferred “the searching process itself rather than what is acquired”.

The discoveries of this study are somewhat similar to those of Clemes et al. (2014) who also found out that convenience, the possibility to have products delivered at home, ease in purchasing and peer influence, are reasons for Chinese consumers to buy online. Time-saving and wide selection were also highlighted by Gong et al. (2013). The results of Credit Suisse (2018), who asserted that saving time was the key reason for Chinese buyers to shop online are also supported. The literature providing evidence that consumers rely on reviews of other users before placing an order is also supported by this study. Furthermore, it also supports the theory that young consumers of the middle-class are worried about the safety of the aliments and place a greater focus on quality than on quantity, as asserted by Credit Suisse (2018), Yu (2014), and Lee et al. (2014).

An interesting fact to emerge from this study is that web design does not really have a positive influence in the online food market in China because a few apps only dominate the industry. Since buyers use the same standard applications that are constructed on selected templates, it is not really possible to make a difference and influence on users. This contradicts the research of Clemes et al. (2014). However, it is posited that pictures and reviews of other consumers make the products and seller more credible, as Gong et al. (2013) explained. The findings support the literature saying that Chinese consumers are price sensitive. However, they contradict the idea that international brands are viewed

as of higher quality. Furthermore, unlike in the study of To et al. (2007), lack of sociality, adventure/exploration, and idea, are not motivations for Chinese to use online grocery shopping or meal delivery services.

The first objective of this study was to determine the shopping motivations of the Chinese online consumers in the food sector. Based on the coding process, a new theory was formulated. Accordingly, a new framework of online shopping motivations is suggested below. Figure 7 summarizes the discoveries of the qualitative study. Compared to the initial research framework explained in chapter 3.1., the figure below contains three new motivations (Security, Lifestyle and Time Saving), whereas weak determinants have been deleted (Lack of Sociality, Adventure/Exploration, Idea).

Chinese Rising Middle-Class Consumers' Motivations to Purchase Food Online	
Utilitarian Rational	Hedonic Emotional
Convenience Time Saving Security Selection Information Availability Cost Saving Customized Products / Services	Lifestyle Authority / Status Social Value

Figure 7: Chinese Rising Middle-Class Consumers' Motivations to Purchase Food Online

5.2. Limitations

The results of the secondary research are very limited in terms of content because a lot of sources were only available in Chinese. If this study had benefitted from a Chinese speaking investigator, the available data could have certainly been more comprehensive and the findings more accurate.

Regarding the primary research, a few limitations have to be considered. First, the findings emerged from a qualitative study. They can therefore not be generalized and applied to all Chinese consumers. They are not representative of the population. Furthermore, the participants of the study all come from or live in Shanghai, which is a city that is different from the rest of the Mainland. As stated by Chan and Zakkour (2014,

p. 92), China is “actually 22 distinct market clusters, each with huge variations in climate, geography, language, income levels, economies, history, and culture”.

Second, the methodology and research framework used in this study were the author’s choice. Another research design would maybe have given different results. Furthermore, within the framework of the analytical approach to the interviews, it was decided to use existing codes, yet self-emerging codes could have led to other outcomes. Also, total objectivity in the results cannot be guaranteed since the analyzes during the coding cycles were influenced by the researcher’s interpretation.

According to Creswell (2014, p. 191), the limitations of the interview method are that it provides information filtered through the views of the interviewees, data is not collected in a natural field setting, the researcher may bias responses and not all participants are equally articulate and perceptive. The findings of interviews depend on the willingness of the participants to reveal their behavior. Furthermore, in this study, even if the participants could choose if they wanted to use voice or video call, it was maybe still not the most comfortable way for them to do it. Another relevant point, in this case, is that all interviews, except for one, were conducted in English, which was not the mother tongue of any of the participant, nor of the interviewer. Native speakers would perhaps have expressed their thoughts differently.

Finally, the topic of this study was very broad. It investigated the behavior of consumers towards food in general. Indeed, the food industry contains many different products. Chinese consumers maybe would have shown different outcomes for specific products. Similarly, the study lumped groceries and meal-delivery services together. During the interviews, different behavior could be examined depending on which service was being talked about.

5.3. Recommendations and Implications

The second and third objectives of this study were to define the success factors for an online seller of food to satisfy Chinese online buyers and to suggest recommendations for Swiss companies active in the food industry and willing to satisfy Chinese online clients. This part focuses on the implications needed for companies to successfully sell food online in China.

China possesses a vast digital ecosystem, controlled by the Internet giants Alibaba, Tencent, JD.com, and Baidu. The online food industry is mainly monopolized by four mobile applications, Tmall, JD.com, Ele.me and Meituan Waimai. At this time, the best strategy for Swiss companies is to collaborate with these large digital platforms to enter the market. First, as the Migros did in 2017, groceries providers can own a shop window on Tmall to be visible to Chinese consumers. Tmall would act as an intermediary between the company and the customers. Then, it is advisable for the company to have a sophisticated logistics system with inventories located in the center of the cities, immediately next to delivery services companies. Since in Shanghai delivery deadline is more a matter of hours, not of days, sellers must be able to deliver their clients' orders almost instantaneously. This can only be possible by collaborating with an existing reliable delivery service provider. To comply with the other motivations of Chinese online buyers of food, other recommendations are presented in Table 8 below. It provides suggestions for online groceries and meal delivery services.

Motivation to Comply With	Groceries	Meal delivery
Convenience	Be on Tmall + JD.com	Be on Ele.me + Meituan Waimai
Time Saving	Partnership with best delivery service companies to offer last-mile delivery	
Security	Provide extensive information available about the products, origins, labels, authentic high-quality pictures	Provide extensive information about the ingredients, origins, cooking method, allergies, labels, authentic high-quality pictures
Selection	Be present on the online marketplace	
Lifestyle	Be present on the mobile applications mentioned above	
Authority / Status	Respect data protection, confidentiality	
Information Availability	Provide information about the products and company	

Cost Saving	Apply prices of the physical market, not higher; suggest free or low-cost delivery	
Social	Allow the customers to share their opinions about the products, comments, send pictures, interact with each other	
Customized Products / Services	Suggest personalized products according to past orders and cooking preferences	Suggest personalized meals according to past orders, time of the day
Value	Propose fidelity programs and discounts	

Table 8: Recommendations for Swiss Companies

According to the consulting firm Deloitte (2017), to counter the cooling down of supermarket trade, companies existing in the physical market need to integrate and establish cooperation between online and offline activities. That is exactly what the supermarket Hema is doing. Inspired by the huge advantages that online groceries shopping offers to consumers mainly motivated by convenience and quick home-delivery service, Hema has started to offer last-mile delivery to its physical customers. This created a new way of grocery shopping. In this case, the client navigates into the supermarket, chooses its goods, which s/he can scan with his/her smartphones if s/he wants to look for more information about it, and pays at the counter. At this moment, the consumer can just leave his/her grocery bag at the supermarket and go home hands-free. A few minutes later, a delivery man will arrive at his/her places with the bag full of purchases. As mentioned in an article of May 2018 by Alizila, a news hub for Alibaba Group,

“The key to New Retail is the mobile phone, which provides the critical connection between online and offline retail to consumers. Brands in China have an advantage here because they don’t need to convince consumers to download and use their apps. That’s because they know 500 million consumers already have the TMall app.”.

This example shows that supermarkets are reacting to the craze for online grocery shopping in China and that online sellers have to stay innovative and listen to the needs of the consumers to remain successful. Furthermore, where the competition is hard

because of a crowded marketplace, online sellers need a very good supply chain infrastructure.

5.4. Future Research

This study could not benefit from any expert's insights. Therefore, further research is needed to gain understanding from the perspective of the market and of a specialist's experience. The findings could help confirm or reject the success factors and shopping motivations that the present study highlighted. Furthermore, as explained above, one limitation of this study is that it was conducted for the food industry in general. A future research project could be to narrow it to a specific product category, such as for example purchases of fruit/vegetables, meat, fish, nonperishable foodstuffs, beverages, etcetera. Similarly, a company could conduct research within a specific potential consumer segment, according to what the firm is selling. Other research could be done in other cities of China. The country is large and faces different types of consumers. It could be interesting to learn about the behavior of consumers in other parts of the country and to compare the findings with the ones of this study to see if they are applicable.

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7. Appendix 1: Incentives to Recruit Participants

To recruit Chinese consumers, the text below was sent to the contact person of the investigator in China. Then, this individual further distributed the message to its personal network. Participants willing to take part in the study directly contacted the researcher with the help of the instant-messaging app WeChat.

Incentive Towards Chinese Consumers

Hi

My name is Charlene, I am 25 years old and student from Switzerland, currently doing my master thesis about online consumption in China. I would like to study how/why Chinese people buy food online (with mobile or computer).

To understand the motivations of Chinese consumers, I'm looking for six voluntary people to interview. It will last around 30 minutes and you don't need any preparation for it. It will probably be done via voice or video call with WeChat (as you prefer).

I want to specify that it is **confidential**, and your privacy will be respected. Your participation only helps me for my master thesis and your results will not be used for marketing or other purposes. **I will not share your contact data** with other persons. Also, **nobody but me will participate, listen or watch the interview.**

If you are between 20 and 35 years old and interested to participate and help a Swiss student to better understand China, please contact me:

- Name: Charlene Max
- E-mail: charlene.max@hotmail.ch
- WeChat: charlenemax

Thank you very much in advance!

To recruit experts, many ways were used. First, the text below was sent to the contact person of the author, who shared it through its network. Second, it was published by the investigator on the professional social media LinkedIn. The message was further shared by other users. Third, after having conducted research or based on recommendations by colleagues, e-mails were also actively sent to potential individuals by the researcher. The list of the persons contacted by e-mail is provided below.

Incentive Towards E-Commerce Experts

Hello,

My name is Charlene Max, I am a Swiss Master student at the Zurich University of Applied Sciences and doing my master thesis about Chinese online consumer behavior. More precisely I'd like to understand the motivations of Chinese consumers to buy food online. For my research and to gain more insights on the Chinese people, I would like to interview an expert in e-commerce in China (max 30 min, voice call).

If you are willing to share your expertise, give a little bit of your time and help me to better understand Chinese consumers, please contact me. It would add a lot of meaning to my research.

I would be very pleased to hear from you.

- Name: Charlene Max
- E-mail: charlene.max@hotmail.ch
- WeChat: charlenemax

Also, don't hesitate to ask me further details.

Thank you very much in advance.

Charlène Max

The individuals below were contacted by e-mail whether because they were eligible experts for the study or because they were persons with a potential network. Discussions went further with some of the individuals below. Unfortunately, at the end it was not possible to arrange an interview with an expert within the timeframe of the study.

- Angela Wang, China retail expert, Boston Consulting Group
- Lucy Ulani, e-commerce manager for a FMCG company
- Michael Simonet, China e-commerce specialist & entrepreneur
- Fabien Abbet, marketing manager in China
- Yuan Jing, project leader academic relations, Swissnex China
- Swissnex China (general secretariat)
- Swiss Centers China (general secretariat)
- Swiss Chinese Chamber of Commerce (general secretariat)
- Luciano Hanyon, helping foreign companies to come to China
- Danli Zhou, project manager, Swissnex China
- Matthieu David-Experton, manager of market research firm based in Shanghai
- Lin Lanlan, e-commerce manager in China
- Xiao Huan Yin, e-commerce specialist, entrepreneur, founded start-up in online FMCG sector

8. Appendix 2: Transcripts of the Interviews

8.1. Transcript of Interview 1

Interviewee	Interviewee1 – An ¹ – Woman, 29 years old, Office Worker (education: Bachelor degree), Shanghai
Interviewer	Charlène Max, ZHAW Zurich University of Applied Sciences
Date and length	8 th July 2018, 9:00 (UTC +1), 25 minutes
Technology	WeChat video call

CM - Thank you so much once again that you offer your time to make this interview with me. Before we start I want to remind you that this interview is for my master thesis and it is anonymous. I think the interview will last around 30 minutes. Do you have any question? Does everything sound clear to you?

Interviewee – *I got it [laugh].*

CM - Before we start I have to ask you, is it ok for you if I record the interview to help me for the transcription afterwards?

Interviewee – *Sure.*

CM – Great. So, like I told you I am student in International Business and I am really fascinated about China, particularly how you guys are using new technologies in your everyday life and how you are buying groceries online. It's amazing. I'd like to understand you better. So, can you tell me a little bit more, why do you actually like to buy food online? Why is it better to buy online than at the supermarket for you?

Interviewee – *I have been shopping on Internet for a lot of years, so I have experience [laughs]. I like to share my opinions and what I know with you. So, I buy food online it's*

¹ This pseudonym is used to ensure participant's confidentiality.

because it's ^{C2}convenient. I can remember when I was a student at the university, I
 started to use Taobao from Alibaba to ^{C3}buy a lot of things. I remember it was ^{C13}11 years
 ago – yeah, I have ^{C13}already done this for a lot of years. It was after I graduated. And
 they started with this ^{C9}new thing and ^{C2}you don't need to go outside anymore to buy food.
 There are ^{C3}a lot of shops on Taobao. ^{C3}You can buy anything. There is ^{C3}everything you
 need, so it's ^{C2}convenient. It feels more and more ^{C2}convenient to buy things on Internet
 because ^{C3}you can find anything. And ^{C9}new things. For example, today if I don't know
 what food to eat I can ^{C4 + C9}look there and find ideas. if I know what I want but I don't know
 where to find it I can go on Taobao and ^{C4}I will look for it. There is ^{C3}everything you want,
 really. It's so ^{C2}convenient and it ^{C14}doesn't take a lot of time! This is the most important
 reason. It's more ^{C14}efficient.

CM – So if I understand you well, you mean it is convenient because you can buy
 everything you want in a short period of time?

Interviewee – Yes, and ^{C14}at any time. And you know the ^{C2}delivery is convenient you ^{C2}don't
 need to carry very heavy bags if you buy a lot of things. It's ^{C2}delivered at your place or at
 your office, ^{C11}you can choose. You ^{C11}place your order and then choose the delivery
 address. Then, they will deliver your order ^{C2}directly at your door. And it is mostly at
^{C1}cheap price.

CM – What kind of food do you buy for example? Is it fresh food like fruits, vegetables,
 meat, or mostly noodle, rice, or everything?

Interviewee – Oh... it depends. Because sometimes food needs to be very fresh. For
 example, if you want fruits or vegetables I think it is more fresh at the supermarket and
 you can see what you buy. Or, I buy them only on ^{C12}very reliable websites. If there is a
^{C12}good brand. Yeah, in general ^{C11}I buy food on very limited websites. There are a few
 anyway.

CM – How do you know if a website is reliable, then?

Interviewee – There are some ^{C12}brands I know. In China we have some supermarkets like Walmart but it's not Walmart. It's another brand. But it's also a big chain. TMall or JD. They have a lot of shops in a lot of cities. And ^{C12}I trust these ones, ^{C11}so I buy the food ^{C12}there. And I also go to the real supermarkets sometimes [laughs] because I like to go there. They have very fresh food and very good. So only for that I go there. Otherwise I prefer to buy on Internet if I can keep the food some days you know.

CM – Yes, I understand what you mean. And then how often do you order food online?

Interviewee – Only food? Well, it is not what I buy the most on Internet. I buy more clothes you know or other things for me, fashion, something for my home. So how often... for the food... If it is something I can keep like bread or nuts, then I take a lot when I buy and maybe I will do this 2-3 times a month. I can keep for a long time you know. The fresh food, I need it every week or actually every day. Yes, I need to eat good fresh food every day. So, maybe I buy fruits and vegetables every day or every 2 days. Because you know I also buy food for lunch time.

CM – Do you mean that you buy food online to prepare your everyday lunch?

Interviewee – No, at lunch time when I'm working I go to eat in a shop or a store you know. Every day I buy food for my lunch directly there. And weekend as well. But in the evening, most of the time I eat at home, so I need to buy food for that.

CM – And in this case do you like to buy Chinese food or also foreign food?

Interviewee – The normal food I like Chinese. But if it is something special from ^{C3}Western countries like you have cheese, very good cheese, then ^{C3}I would buy it from ^{C3}foreign Western brands. ^{C3}For the things Western countries are good at, then I would buy ^{C3}that. Otherwise everything I buy Chinese [laughs].

CM – Okay I get it. And we talked about reliable websites before. You told me that it is important for you that you use a brand that you know. What about your friends, if they suggest you a website that you don't know will you trust them to order food there?

Interviewee – Yeah, yeah, I will. At least ^{C11} I will try several times, because ^{C11} I have to try ^{C12} to know if it is good. I will decide if it is a good brand. And if it's good I can buy more ^{C11} often in the future. But I think ^{C11} I will just try some type of the food, I mean only several or specific items I will try. Not big order, for the first time you know. So, if my friends tell ^{C11} me about a website I will try but ^{C11} in the end, I will decide if I like it or not.

CM – What would be the thing that makes you to not trust the website? What could be the reason to say “No, I don't make an order there”?

Interviewee – For me, it is ^{C12} according to what I know about the website or not. You ^{C8} know ^{C8 + C4} some customers they write comment. So, I would ^{C8} look at the comments, the ^{C8} pictures, ^{C8} what the customers say. And if I don't feel like ordering I would change the ^{C11} website. You know on the pictures you can see very clearly because the customers ^{C4} they do pictures of the food and ^{C4} you can see whether it was good or not. You see what ^{C11} they received. So according to that if it is good looking I will chose or not to order.

CM – And when you say “good looking” do you mean only the food or also the website? Is the design of the website important for you?

Interviewee – Yes, for example ^{C11} I like to feel comfortable when I use a website. It needs ^{C2} to be clear you know. To be clear, easy. It ^{C2} must be easy to find the products. Because ^{C2 + C14} you don't want to search too long if you know what you want. ^{C2} If it is too complicated I prefer to leave it and use another one.

CM – Do you have an example of a website that you like for the design?

Interviewee – [long silence] I don't know! I never had to think about that, so I don't

know how to answer this question. I cannot tell you. I don't care actually. I don't care about the name of the website you know I don't remember. Sorry, I cannot tell you.

CM – Don't worry it's ok. No problem. Maybe easier for you, can you tell me if you rather like websites with a lot of text or a lot of pictures? A lot of colors or not?

Interviewee – *Not a lot of colors so that is more clear. Otherwise it is confusing. And with a lot of pictures it is better because you know ^{C11} you want to see the food very well ^{C11 + C4} and ^{C11 + C4} see if it's your taste or not, if it's cooked as you like. Yes, this is really important, to have good pictures.*

CM – When you do shopping online do you use your smartphone or computer?

Interviewee – *My phone. Everything with my phone. I used an iPhone before, now it is Huawei. Chinese brand [laugh]. Have you heard about it?*

CM – Sure! In Switzerland we can also buy Huawei phones.

Interviewee – *Really? Yeah, they are big. They sell all around the world.*

CM – Yes, true. And I suppose you also use an app to pay when you buy online?

Interviewee – *Yes, in China we have WeChat, Alipay... I use both of them. It is with your bank account. It is very ^{C2} simple, ^{C2} easy. ^{C2} Convenient. At the end of your order they ask you how you want to pay and then you just select the app you want to use.*

CM – And when do you like to order food during the day?

Interviewee – *^{C2} Anytime! [laughs] I mean ^{C2} at home, ^{C2} at my office, ^{C2} on my way home, ^{C2} on the bus, ^{C2} in the metro... Yeah, ^{C2} everywhere. You know when you use the phone it is so ^{C2} convenient. So, I don't really have a special time. It just ^{C2 + C14} depends what I am doing and what I want to have at this moment.*

CM – Do you order food every day?

Interviewee – No, not every day. When I lack of something, ^{C11 + C2}when I need it. Sometimes when I want to buy something instead of going to shopping mall you know I go on ^{C3 + C4}TMall because you can search, and you will find it. Or I use other websites on Internet if I really don't see it on TMall, but this is not happening very often. And you know you ^{C12}can find the best quality and also ^{C1}cheaper prices online. It's very ^{C2}convenient. ^{C13}I don't know how I would do without my smartphone [laughs].

CM – I think we've talked about a lot of things. What else would you like to share with me about food online in China?

Interviewee – Actually you know in China food is not always good to buy on Internet. If ^{C12}you don't know the brand you are worried about the quality. There are problems ^{C12}because you know you are worried about the products, about the quality. And sometimes on the website they show good pictures but maybe when you see the ^{C12}delivery it is not so good as what you saw on Internet. And it is food, you have to eat it. ^{C12}It's not like clothes or something else to use. You have to eat it it's for the health. So, ^{C12}you have to be very careful.

CM – Is it why you still go to supermarket? Is it sometimes safer?

Interviewees – Yes, for some kind of food like the fresh vegetables as I told you. But ^{C12}otherwise I buy on the Internet and I mostly buy the ^{C12}brands that I know. I know they are ^{C12}good. It's safer you know.

CM – Yes, I understand. Well, thank you very much for all of this information. It is really helpful because from here in Europe it is very difficult to imagine how you live in China and typically how you do groceries online. Thank you once again.

Interviewees – It's ok. I like to share some information if I can help. It's ok. And I think it's an interesting topic of research. Come to China! [laughs]

8.2. Transcript of Interview 2

Interviewee	Interviewee2 – Chuang-Mu ² – Woman, 22 years old, Intern (education: Bachelor degree in Information Technology), Shanghai
Interviewer	Charlène Max, ZHAW Zurich University of Applied Sciences
Date and length	8 th July 2018, 11:00 (UTC +1), 40 minutes
Technology	WeChat voice call

CM - Thank you so much once again that you offer your time to make this interview with me. Before we start I want to remind you that this interview is for my master thesis and it is anonymous. I think the interview will last around 30 minutes. Do you have any question? Does everything sound clear to you?

Interviewee – *Yes, everything good.*

CM - Before we start I have to ask you, is it ok for you if I record the interview to help me for the transcription afterwards?

Interviewee – *That's no problem.*

CM – Great. So, like I told you I am student in International Business and I am really fascinated about China, particularly how you guys are using new technologies in your everyday life and how you are buying groceries online. It's amazing. I'd like to understand you better. So, can you tell me a little bit more, why do you actually like to buy food online? Why is it better to buy online than at the supermarket for you?

Interviewee – *Ok, so to give you an overview I just graduated from University. In Chinese universities we have canteens and students go to the canteen to have lunch. But meal*
C13 C2

² This pseudonym is used to ensure participant's confidentiality.

delivery or ordering food online is much more **common** and **convenient** than before. And even though the canteen food is cheap, and quality is good, most students still prefer ordering online for many reasons. And strange enough is that boys order more than girls. Especially for the breakfast. Because sometimes they are just **too lazy** to even get out of bed and go to canteen [laughs]. Or someone or some people would just get there to have breakfast but then the others order food because it's **very convenient** to have delivery food for breakfast. For lunch sometimes, the canteen is so crowded you know it's full of people and it's just **nice** that **you can stay in your dorm room, you can organize delivered food with your roommates, cozy...** you know **you don't need to go out it's just convenient**. And the point with online food is also that it's at **reasonable price**, it's sometimes even cheaper because if you order food with your friends you will **get a discount** or if you order food always on the same website they will give you **discount** for the numerous orders. But this won't happen if you go to **real stores, they give you no discount**. I mean, yeah... it's **nice** online. I think so. And I mean the mobile apps they provide **visibility for whether the food is ok, whether ... I don't know... it's just too convenient for not using it**. For Chinese university students we really have a lot of time to spend with roommates, I mean some of the students really like to spend a lot of time with roommates and with food delivery, the possibility to **have food delivered and to eat together is convenient**.

CM – That's really interesting.

Interviewee – I am doing an internship now, I mean since after graduation. From working I'd say generally I prefer to eat outside. You know, with colleagues, in shops and stores. But **when the workload is too much, or we don't have so much time** we would order food. I am now working in a business area and the food prices are quite high so sometimes when you **don't want to spend too much** for food your order online because there is a **wider range of price and a lot of choice**. You are **not limited to the actual stores** around that really charge a lot [laughs].

CM – So you've talked a lot about meal delivery, but do you also do grocery shopping online for your food at home?

Interviewee – *For me not that much. I just graduated and I'm pretty ... lazy with cooking [laughs]. I don't cook much. I feel a bit ashamed to say that [laughs].*

CM – Don't worry for that! Some people like it, some don't. That's alright!

Interviewee – *[laughs] So, you know in the evening I also order meals online or I go to eat outside. But my friends they prefer to order grocery online too because it's very fast, convenient, and you don't need to go in the city and carry your stuff you know. They deliver it at your place for nearly nothing, I mean the price of the delivery. They buy food online maybe 3-4 times a week. Most of the time they order in the morning and they know that in the evening when they come home they will receive the food, you know. They do it before they go to work. Also, if they want something for lunch at the office they can have it delivered at work. Because sometimes you can cook at work. You know if you don't want to order meals that are already prepared because they contain too much sugar or addictive, you know, you can order just grocery and cook meals at work. So, you order everything in the morning for example during your way to office or so. Very convenient. You don't need to go to the market.*

CM – And regarding your consumption habits, do you prefer to order Chinese brands or also Western food?

Interviewee – *Oh, very good question [laughs]. So, I prefer Chinese. Most of the time I eat Chinese food, yeah. But you know in my company there are quite a lot of Hong Kong people. And although we are in China and the rest of the colleagues are Chinese, normally when we go outside to eat we go for Western food to make them feel more comfortable. Yes, because they just worry that Chinese food is not as clean as in Western restaurants [laughs], and that, sometimes, is the truth. But I mean, for local*

Chinese, eating this local food, we don't care as much as they do [laughs]. It's like "yeah, we have already eaten this food 30 years long so what do you want me to do?!" But for C3 the snacks or desserts or like salads of course Westerns brands. Because they do this better than in China. But the rest for me it's Chinese food.

CM – I see. Then, if you order lunch online, are you sometimes ordering at two different places, like one for the meal and one for the desserts or for the snacks?

C3

Interviewee – Yes, true! Sometimes I order many things from different places. Or during the day if I want snacks I will order once again, and it does not necessarily come from the same restaurant as the one I order for lunch.

CM – And when you want to order food on the Internet, is it with your mobile or do you do it with a computer as well?

C13

Interviewee – Of course mobile! I don't think there is anyone ordering from computer, come on! [laughs]. No, really, I wouldn't see anyone ordering from computer. That would be quite interesting to see that! [laughs].

CM – Yes, I think your mobile is just all-day long with you and there is no other way to order, right?

C11 + C14

Interviewee – Right. You know you can order whenever you want and also from C2 everywhere. I mean you don't need to be especially at the office in front of your computer to make an order. With your mobile it doesn't matter. You can be C2 in the bus C2 in the morning, C2 at home, C2 in a store... it doesn't matter. You feel like you need to order C2 something then you just do it. And with the mobile it's very C2 convenient to pay. You know in China we have Alipay, WeChat... it works everything well with your mobile. So C2 convenient.

CM – And you told me before, the delivery time is very quick. When you order food, what

is the maximum delivery time you would accept?

Interviewee – Of course, ^{C14}that's why so many people are ordering online. I would say, ^{C14}you know, if it's meal delivery, well normally ^{C14}very quick like less than 1 hour. If it's for ^{C11 + C14}grocery shopping, then just the same day. For example, ^{C14}if you order in the morning you expect to be delivered in the evening, unless you can wait because it's not urgent. But ^{C14}well normally ^{C14}when you order something you need it now, right? [laughs]. But for lunch delivery in the pick time, when you are working, people are all ordering online at the same time, so when it's a working day it can take more time. But in this case, you can ^{C14}order a little bit before. Me for example I order around 10 or 11 am. But some of my colleagues order around 1 pm. It depends. But it can be long sometimes.

CM – And do you always use the same website to order your food?

Interviewee – What do you mean the same website? The same app?

CM – Yes.

Interviewee – Yes, there are just 2 apps for food ordering so normally I use the same. There is 1 app from Alipay and 1 app from WeChat. Alipay and WeChat have their own meal delivery app. From Alipay it's called Ele.me and the other it's Meituan. I know some colleagues use other platforms, but I don't. I mean most of the people use these two I told you. On these interfaces there are food but also other things like cinema, taxi, hair service... different services. Food delivery is just one of the function of these interfaces. Of course, they provide grocery shopping as well. Actually, for grocery you would use TMall or JD.

CM – And what do you like on this apps if we talk about design? Do you like it when there is a lot of text or you prefer a lot of pictures? What is better for you?

Interviewee – Of course, pictures. I don't like to read the text. Also, the design should

be nice and clear, you know. Like using the colors of the logo. I think websites with one color are better because the interface looks more clear. But what is important I think is the rating. You can see if it's good food, popular food. There are really strict ratings, and this is important on a website. If you want to know about a shop you look for the food, how it looks like, is it serious, popular... you can also use filters and look for the food that are on sale, it is cheaper. Yeah, I think the filters are also important on the website. That is how you can find the food you like you know. You filter and in the end you have the product you want. So, you can have your choice very easily. And a lot of ratings from the users are important. The comments... And the most important to say here is that there are pictures with every comment. Usually in China if someone makes a comment on food he will leave a picture as well. So that you can see how it is. Straight forward from the user how the food is like, whether it's like your expectations, is it for your taste... The users post the picture with the comment automatically. Convenient.

CM – These comments, where do you see them?

Interviewee – On Alipay. Directly in the interface. Because normally I order from Alipay.

CM – Are these comments from users you don't know equally important that what your friends or family would say?

Interviewee – I would say it's the same. You know if you have a lot of users saying something then you believe them, you know [laughs]. And like I said they have pictures so you can directly check what they say. It doesn't really matter if it's a recommendation from a friend or not actually. The description and picture are more important. Their comments have a lot of power. So, I don't really look if it's someone I know or not. But for sure if my friends recommend me something I would give it a try as well. But online it doesn't really depend on friends.

CM – Thank you for your precious information. That's really interesting. I think you have

a very different everyday-life than we have in some Western countries.

Interviewee – *I think it's very interesting that you study the food topic because I do think that food topic is the most difficult to discuss or develop in China. I mean, if you want to develop business in China. It's so huge and diverse. And so much different from any other nation because the food industry in China is really interesting. Sometimes tricky.*
C12
You know sometimes it's difficult for us as well to know if food is good or not, if the companies do good job or not. I think that's why we started to always comment and so.
C12
C12 + C8
We don't always trust the companies, so we comment it and want to help others. If it's good food we want to share it, if it's not good we also want to say it so that others don't buy it you know.

CM – I see. That's really helpful. Thank you very much for your time and your precious help!

Interviewee – *No problem, you can still contact me if you need further information. I would be happy to help.*

8.3. Transcript of Interview 3

Interviewee	Interviewee3 – Kuan-Ti ³ – Man, 35 years old, Financial Analyst (education: Bachelor degree), Shanghai
Interviewer	Charlène Max, ZHAW Zurich University of Applied Sciences
Date and length	8 th July 2018, 13:00 (UTC +1), 15 minutes
Technology	WeChat voice call

CM - Thank you so much once again that you offer your time to make this interview with me. Before we start I want to remind you that this interview is for my master thesis and it is anonymous. I think the interview will last around 30 minutes. Do you have any question? Does everything sound clear to you?

Interviewee – Yes.

CM - Before we start I have to ask you, is it ok for you if I record the interview to help me for the transcription afterwards?

Interviewee – *It's ok, let's get started.*

CM – Great. So, like I told you I am student in International Business and I am really fascinated about China, particularly how you guys are using new technologies in your everyday life and how you are buying groceries online. It's amazing. I'd like to understand you better. So, can you tell me a little bit more, why do you actually like to buy food online? Why is it better to buy online than at the supermarket for you?

Interviewee – *What do you mean by online? Is it like buying from mobile phone apps?*

CM – Yes.

Interviewee – It's very ^{C2}convenient if you order food online. Maybe ^{C14}after 30 or 35 minutes

³ This pseudonym is used to ensure participant's confidentiality

the food will be delivered ^{C2} *directly to your place.* *That's quite* ^{C2} *easy* *and* ^{C2} *convenient.*

CM – So for you, the main reason you use it is because it's very fast?

Interviewee – Yes, ^{C2} *and I don't need to go outside.*

CM – May I ask you, why is it good for you not to go outside?

Interviewee – Well, ^{C14} *I can save time.* ^{C14} *You know it's quicker* ^{C14} *because you can work or do*
^{C2} *your stuff at home and don't need to worry about going out to supermarket.*

CM – You told me you order with your mobile. Are you always using the same app to buy food shopping?

Interviewee – Well, ^{C11} *I always use Ele.me.* ^{C12} *I only use this.* *It's the best one in China.*

CM – And on this app do you buy Chinese food or Western brands? What do you prefer?

Interviewee – ^{C3} *I prefer Western food and Japanese food.*

CM – Nice, are you also Japanese?

Interviewee – *No, I'm Chinese.*

CM – And when you buy food online, what kind of product do you buy? Is it for everything including fruits, vegetables, noodle, bread... or only specific items?

Interviewee – *Usually I buy a combo, which must contain meat.*

CM – So, a combo is like a package with some products together?

Interviewee – *Yes, usually with rice, meat, fresh vegetables.*

CM – Do you order this combo every day, or many times in the week?

Interviewee – *Well, maybe 3 or 4 times a week.*

CM – When you order it, is it from your mobile phone or computer?

Interviewee – Yes, ^{C13}*only mobile.*

CM – And when does it happen? Is it from home or office?

Interviewee – *Mostly in the office. Usually during the day then.*

CM – So you don't do this when you are at home or in the evening?

Interviewee – *Well, for breakfast I usually cook by myself. But in the office. I cannot cook*
^{C2}*so I order meal.*

CM – And when you want to cook, do you also do grocery shopping with your mobile?

Interviewee – Yes, ^{C14}*it's quick,* ^{C2}*convenient.* And you ^{C3}*have a lot of choice.*

CM – What is the most important for you when you buy food online?

Interviewee – *Well, I'm kind of on a* ^{C12}*heavy diet.* *So, I would* ^{C12}*prefer food that is healthy*
^{C12}*and doesn't hurt my stomach.* *When I order food for home it should be* ^{C12}*fresh and* ^{C12}*healthy.*
And also when I'm at the office and I order a meal for lunch I look that it is ^{C12}*good and*
^{C12}*healthy.*

CM – How do you know the food is good when you visit the app?

Interviewee – *I don't look at any comment.* ^{C7 + C11}*I just discover good things by myself... yeah.*

CM – How long have you been using online shopping?

Interviewee – *Online shopping, so not only for food?*

CM – No, online shopping in general, for everything.

Interviewee – Well, 6 years or so.

CM – And food online shopping?

C13

Interviewee – *It's been like 4 years maybe.*

CM – Now I'd like to ask you some questions regarding the design. Which kind of website do you like? Do you like it when there are a lot of colors? A lot of pictures?

C2

C2

Interviewee – *Well, I think it must be easy to use. It should be convenient: open the application, choose food and order. It must be convenient for me. I don't want to think*

C2

C2

"where is the button", "where is the food" etcetera. The color doesn't matter. And it must contain a filter option. If you want Japanese food for example you should be able to filter to only see Japanese food.

C4

CM – A filter so that's it's easier to find what you want?

Interviewee – Yes.

CM – Do you like it when there are pictures to see the food?

C12

Interviewee – *Well, you know sometimes the pictures are fake, so you know... I don't really look at pictures.*

CM – Well, thank you for these insights. Do you have something else to add regarding your motivations to buy food online?

Interviewee – *I think the most important thing is that ordering food online is very*

C2

C1

C1

convenient. And delivery fee is very cheap you know, very low in China. That's why we

C1

choose it. Delivery fee is sometimes 5 RMB, it's affordable right?

CM – Yes, that is interesting. Well, thank you very much for all of this and for your participation to this interview.

Interviewee – You're welcome.

8.4. Transcript of Interview 4

Interviewee	Interviewee4 – Chan ⁴ – Man, 30 years old, Communications Manager (education: Master degree in Management), Shanghai
Interviewer	Charlène Max, ZHAW Zurich University of Applied Sciences
Date and length	9 th July 2018, 14:00 (UTC +1), 35 minutes
Technology	WeChat voice call

CM - Thank you so much once again that you offer your time to make this interview with me. Before we start I want to remind you that this interview is for my master thesis and it is anonymous. I think the interview will last around 30 minutes. Do you have any question? Does everything sound clear to you?

Interviewee – *Yes, all good.*

CM - Before we start I have to ask you, is it ok for you if I record the interview to help me for the transcription afterwards?

Interviewee – *Sure. No worries.*

CM – Great. So, like I told you I am student in International Business and I am really fascinated about China, particularly how you guys are using new technologies in your everyday life and how you are buying groceries online. It's amazing. I'd like to understand you better. So, can you tell me a little bit more, why do you actually like to buy food online? Why is it better to buy online than at the supermarket for you?

Interviewee – *By buying food do you mean groceries, or do you mean meal delivery?*

CM – Actually both of them, but we can start with groceries.

⁴ This pseudonym is used to ensure participant's confidentiality

Interviewee – It's very ^{C2}convenient and it's also because of the ^{C10}discounts. If you're buying ^{C1}through the applications they take in charge the delivery charges, and also you can ^{C10}collect points and have ^{C10}little discounts through ^{C10}memberships. Actually, ^{C10}that's not something you're going to get at markets. There's still going to be quite a lot of people, more senior people, who are going to the markets and buy their vegetables and groceries from there, but younger generations ^{C13}they do not do it anymore. The ^{C2}convenience of using mobile shopping is great. And very often the young people that work for long hours they ^{C14}may never reach the supermarket within the open hours. Or they will but ^{C14}it will be late, and they may want to go at home.

CM – Are you also still buying at the supermarket or do you do all groceries on mobile?

Interviewee – Me personally, pretty much ^{C13}100% with mobile. I mean, ^{C13 + C2}why should I still go to supermarket if I can order everything and have it delivered at my place. It's very different from Switzerland where you really still use both options to go to Migros or make an order online, but in this case you have to plan in advance the delivery if you order on the website, right?

CM – Right, we don't have such short deadlines as you have in Shanghai.

Interviewee – Even in London. I used to live there for a couple of months and there are ^{C2 + C13}two grocery online websites, but they are still at first stage level. It's ^{C2 + C13}not so convenient as in China.

CM – Sure. That's why I want to know how it is going in China. It's very convenient, you said. And you talked about the price and the delivery, right? Do you also have more choice when you buy online?

Interviewee – ^{C3}Absolutely. ^{C3}Yes. That's another thing that is ^{C3}essential. If you go to the groceries or markets, especially now, they're not going to be able to stock everything,

right? Online it's much easier. Everything is coming from a warehouse so there's really
C3
no need like a shop front. There's a lot more varieties.

CM – Do you always use the same app or are you switching?

Interviewee – Mostly the same app. There are some main applications that everyone
C3
uses like TMall, which is part of the Taobao group, and JD.com, which provides a lot of
services, products and also food delivery service. They're going into like supermarkets
and pharmacies. They're going horizontally on the chain and offer free delivery services.

CM – That's interesting.

Interviewee – It's pretty much because of Uber. Because Uber's going into free delivery,
C3
so they have to catch up.

CM – When you order food, do you like to buy Chinese or Western brands?

Interviewee – Actually, it really depends on where I am in Shanghai. It depends on the
C6 + C11 C6
place you live. The app will adapt itself depending on the location. If you are living in the
C6
French Concession there's obviously going to be more of Western restaurants. In that
C6 + C3
case, I would order Western food. There's much, much larger expats population in this
C3
area. It is going to depend on your area and that goes with the groceries as well. If you
are, let's say, like in the Gubei Districts, there are a lot of Japanese expats, so some are
C3 C3
Japanese restaurants and Japanese shopping malls. The selection would be more
C3
towards the Japanese food there. If I am in one of those areas I will order whatever food
C11 C2 C6 C3
I want to eat at the moment regarding the offers. If I am at home I like to have sometimes
Chinese food, sometimes Western. I used to live in London and Switzerland for some
time, so I like Western food as well.

CM – Is there any difference for you in the quality of food between Chinese and Western?

Interviewee – Not really. I mean, you can find both, very good Chinese or Western food,

as well as very bad. You just have to ^{C12}be careful what you buy. But usually before you ^{C4 + C8}order something ^{C4 + C12}you can see the comments of the other consumers who bought it, so it makes it easier to see if it's good quality food or not.

CM – Does it mean that before you buy something you would have a look at what other people say about it?

Interviewee – Yes. In most applications, there are ^{C8}incentives for people to review a product and ^{C8}put pictures of the product. If you do that you will ^{C10}get bonus points that can ^{C4}go back into whatever you purchase. Most people tend to look at a review of a product, ^{C4 + C11}want to see if there were a problem with the food or the delivery, or they just want to be ^{C12}sure there are positive reviews for what they are going to buy.

CM – Regarding the delivery, what is for you the acceptable delivery time if you order food? When do you expect it?

Interviewee – For the groceries the range is probably like ^{C14}between 1 hour and 15 minutes to 30 minutes so there's really not that much differentiation. You are going to get it ^{C14}pretty quickly. They use to ^{C14}give you the estimates of when you are going to get it. They usually ^{C14}don't go above like 1 hour and 30 minutes. It's not like in Europe. The labor ^{C1}here is ^{C14}not that expensive and it tends to be delivered quite quickly. You're not going to have a decision that's based on that, that much concession, I don't think that it's that much of an issue when you order food or something else online. Well, maybe for the meal delivery service then I think less than 1 hour is good. But it will ^{C14}never be very long. Because everything you order should be ^{C6}in the same area than where you are. The apps ^{C6}are programmed for that. Plus, there's actually a whole kind of review system of the ^{C14}deliverymen and restaurants so they try to be very quick with the delivery times anyway to receive good reviews. I've not had too much of issues with this.

CM – Okay. Fine. Now, I would like to ask you some questions about the app you are

using. Is it important for you how the website looks like? I mean colors, design...?

Interviewee – Well, I don't really care about that. In the end, all the apps have kind of
C11
the same functions and design. It doesn't really matter as soon as I can find what I want
C14
and order quickly.

CM – And are the pictures relevant for you when you order food online? Do you like it
when there are a lot of pictures on the app?

Interviewee – Yes. C4
High-quality pictures definitely influence the purchasing decision
C4 + C8 C1
quite a bit, along with the reviews and price. Because regarding the price, most shops
they have coupons, and they issue these one-time coupons, say for a value of 7 RMB to
10 RMB. That actually influences people's decisions along with the pictures and review.

CM – If I understand you well, when you order you automatically look at 3 things: pictures,
reviews and price. Is that right?

C4 + C8 + C1 C4 + C8 + C1
Interviewee – Exactly, the most important things that will influence my decision to order
or not.

CM – Alright. We've talk a lot about this mobile apps. So, I guess you always buy with
your mobile, right? You don't use a computer to do your online shopping?

Interviewee – Well, very rarely. Only sometimes when I am at the office. But usually not,
because I don't order food during working hours. If I want to order lunch, then I will do it
C13
from my mobile because I have the apps on my smartphone.

CM – Then, during the day when are you doing grocery shopping?

Interviewee – Most of the time I do that on the weekends. Or, sometimes when I get
C2 + C11
home after work if I see that I need something to cook I will order it right at that moment
C14 C2
because usually it's so quick to be delivered that you don't have to think about that in

advance. But if I want to order meal delivery for lunch for example then it's at the office
C14
so when I'm working, and usually I do it 1 hour in advance. Basically, the main difference
C2
with Switzerland is that we don't have to think about it in advance like you, because
C14
for the delivery time can be some days when here it's only some hours.

CM – Right. For how long have you been back in China?

Interviewee – 2 months

CM – And how long have you been ordering food online there?

Interviewee – C13
2 months as well, and already before I left.

CM – Is there something else you would like to add about why you buy food online?

Something else we didn't talk about?

Interviewee – C2
Essentially, it's just convenient and C13
everyone does it. C2
Whether at work or C2
for home. Some people use it more than others but really, I think it's so convenient. Like
C13
C1 C2 C11 + C13
“why wouldn't you do it?”. It's cheap. It's convenient. It suits to the lifestyle of people here
have. Especially the office workers. If you're not going to have much time for lunch,
C2
whether you plan to go to a restaurant in the area and eat there or you order meal. You're
not going to take food from home with you. And the younger generation, they really don't
C2
have that much time to cook while working, so it's much easier to just order food. This is
C13
kind of Shanghai, Beijing, Shenzhen lifestyles. These are kind of like the tier one cities.
As you know, these places they are not like the rest of the planet [laughs]. Most people,
whoever is told about China, they think Shanghai, they think Beijing, they think
Shenzhen. These are only the largest cities. Here, you can walk into restaurants and just
C13
pay with your mobile phone everywhere. The adoption rate has been really crazy. If you
go to a third tier city, that's not going to be the case. People are using cash there. I literally
personally haven't touched cash in like two months.

CM – Yes, I understand the difference. Well, thank you very much for your opinion about this topic.

Interviewee – *My pleasure.*

CM – I think we've touched a lot of many different issues and that's good for my research. I will now let you unless you have something else to add?

Interviewee – *I'm happy to help. Let me know if there's anything else you need.*

CM – Sure, thank you very much and have a nice evening!

Interviewee – *Thank you, you too have a nice day!*

8.5. Transcript of Interview 5

Interviewee	Interviewee5 – Fang ⁵ – Woman, 28 years old, Marketing Manager (education: Master degree in Marketing), Shanghai
Interviewer	Charlène Max, ZHAW Zurich University of Applied Sciences
Date and length	11 th July 2018, 12:00 (UTC +1), 40 minutes
Technology	WeChat video call

CM - Thank you so much once again that you offer your time to make this interview with me. Before we start I want to remind you that this interview is for my master thesis and it is anonymous. I think the interview will last around 30 minutes. Do you have any question? Does everything sound clear to you?

Interviewee – Yes.

CM - Before we start I have to ask you, is it ok for you if I record the interview to help me for the transcription afterwards?

Interviewee – Yes.

CM – Great. So, like I told you I am student in International Business and I am really fascinated about China, particularly how you guys are using new technologies in your everyday life and how you are buying groceries online. It's amazing. I'd like to understand you better. So, can you tell me a little bit more, why do you actually like to buy food online? Why is it better to buy online than at the supermarket for you?

Interviewee – ^{C2} *Convenience*.

CM – Convenience?

Interviewee – ^{C2} *Convenience*. ^{C2} *There's no other reason. It's really not cheaper or faster,*

⁵ This pseudonym is used to ensure participant's confidentiality.

it's just ^{C2}more convenient. I just moved back from Europe to China three months ago. In
^{C13}a month's time, I quickly adapted to the rhythm here. In general, in the bigger cities in
^{C14}China, people work longer hours, then the commute is longer. For example, when I leave
^{C14}the office at 7:00 PM, if I still have to do grocery shopping during the day, it would be
 10:00 before I can finish having dinner. Normally, what people do is they tend to buy
^{C2}things ^{C14}when they're commuting or before they get off work, so ^{C14}by the time they get home,
 they will have it delivered.

Plus, I'm thinking there are ^{C3}more and more options to get it from ^{C3}different vendors, then
 it becomes very competitive, so it's not significantly more expensive than when you get
^{C10}it in the store. Actually, you can also get better promotions, because online it's easier to
 get economy of scale instead of trying to push it as a daily special at the supermarket.

^{C1}Sometimes you can get things very cheap as a hook, then once you go into the store,
^{C2}you will buy more things that you need as a daily necessity. That is just very convenient.
 Actually nowadays, consumers in China, they no longer go to a physical store to buy
 grocery because it's just not necessary anymore. Also for electronics, make-up... unless
 you buy a car, it's really not necessary for you to go to any store at all. The only difference
 would be if you want to experience or try something in person. Then, what they would
 usually do is they will go to a store to try it, then they will still search online and buy from
 wherever that's cheapest. If it's cheapest in the offline store, at that moment, they will
 buy it. For example, an air conditioner or washing machine. If it's cheaper online, they
^{C14}will still order it online because the delivery service is so fast.

^{C3}You can really order anything. You can order ^{C3}fruit and vegetables, seafood, frozen meat,
^{C3}fresh meat. Basically, everything that you can buy at Carrefour or Metro, you can get it
^{C2}online delivered. Basically, there's a third-party delivery service. For example, if I order
 from the Carrefour close to the office, I can order a third-party app to go to the

^{C2 + C11}
supermarket to ^{C13}pick up what I bought from the supermarket, but basically, I'm still buying
^{C2}financially from that place, but ^{C13}I'm not going there anymore. It's really ^{C2}not needed for me
^{C13}to visit the store to get anything I want from the store. That's the ^{C13}basic logic.

CM – This is totally different from here in Europe. When you say the delivery is fast, does it mean it's the same day?

^{C14}
Interviewee – It's usually ^{C14}within two hours. If you buy something from the third-party app,
^{C6}basically what they do is they of course have to ^{C6}limit the areas we can buy things from.
Let's say it's below five kilometers, then they have a team who can pick it up from
^{C14}wherever your location is. That's usually ^{C14}within an hour. ^{C14}Maximum, under two hours. For
^{C14}closer areas, it ^{C14}can be with you in 30 minutes.

For example, when I'm buying something, when I've already bought a bag of things and
^{C14}when I'm cooking, I realize I don't have vinegar. ^{C14}I just order it online, in 30 minutes, it's
^{C14}at my door. If you buy electronics, or clothing, or shoes, or something that's more durable,
durable goods, it can arrive fastest within a day, so within eight hours. In the morning
last week, I ordered a mouse. In the evening, by the time I left the office, it was delivered
to the office from another city.

It's very accurate, it's mainly driven by the competition in the online space. It was really
^{C14}driving the logistics of China, especially the ^{C14}last-minute delivery. There are apps that are
less known and offer similar price to the most known stores, but it can only be with me
^{C14 + C11}within three days, then ^{C14 + C11}I go for that one that I know is faster. That's the overall
environment that's pushing everybody to invest more to improve the logistics systems.

CM – That's interesting. Are you ordering food every day?

Interviewee – A few times a week, I think. Mostly expenditure highly depends on what you buy. There are two major shopping festivals/promotion days. There's Double 11, so

that's 11th of November, and the 18th of June. That's from two of the biggest online retailers. They do that. Then the whole ecosystem adapts to the price. Basically, the whole ecosystem in China has to give a deeper discount during that time. That is spending peak.

For buying fruit and vegetables, I think it's fairly stable throughout the year. It depends if you have children, maybe you order more frequent. Because I don't have children, so I don't have the need to order on a daily basis. I think that probably depend on your family needs, or where you live, or if you have a store next to you or not. I would say on average, I would order it twice a week minimum.

Then for durables, I order that just ad hoc. On average, I order probably four or five times a month. For example, today I realized that I need a pair of shoes for training. That is within three days at my door. Tomorrow, I want to buy bedsheets. I buy from another store because most of them are delivered at a very minimum shipping cost. I don't have to accumulate the orders, I can order them always whenever I need it.

That's the same as if you order food online, meaning ready-made food from a restaurant. That's at least done ^{C13} once a day. Because usually here from my office, ^{C2} when the weather gets really hot, people order from around this office without going there. I think if you don't have the need, if you can walk somewhere to get food, then you don't have to order that every day, but you would order that still very, ^{C13} very often.

There is a study that shows people who are living alone, especially younger people, they survive on takeout because the takeout is so ^{C14} fast and it's very ^{C2} convenient. Basically, ^{C13} every single restaurant in the whole country can deliver. ^{C13} If there's one restaurant that doesn't deliver, it's seen as a very weird behavior, because they don't have to have their own delivery system.

There's another online provider that has the whole team of delivery service, so the

restaurants that are in this business, they don't have to invest anything. They just have to prepare the box and the box will be picked up and delivered to your doorstep usually within an hour.

CM – So, you're using the groceries online shopping and the meal delivery services?

Interviewee – Yes. I think that's a normal consumption model if I look at the people around me. Let's say during a week, if you live alone or if you are work in an office where you can't bring your own food, or it's simply the weather's too hot, you don't want to go outside, or your area doesn't have so many options, then you would order food. Then, the food ranges from 20 RMB, that's like 2 € to 3 €, all the way up to 10 €, 20 €. Because you don't order very expensive food, you order pastas or rice combos.

For grocery, usually you'd pay a marginal fee that's around 5 RMB, that's like 0.80 €. Roughly, it's always under 1 franc, for example. You wouldn't buy things for only 1 franc, you would buy at least four times the value to justify the delivery. There are always a lot of convenience stores where you can get salt and pepper. They're not really urgent thing that you need. Usually, you order fresh vegetables, that's just around the corner. You get it very easily. Then you would order, based on my experience per order, all the way from 30 RMB to 150 RMB, sometimes even more if I buy premium meat.

CM – For how long have you been back in China?

Interviewee – 3 months.

CM – And you've been using this system since the beginning?

Interviewee – Yes, it didn't take a while until I got used to everything. And once you get used to the system, it's very easy to stick into the system.

CM – Are you ordering Chinese food or also foreign brands like Western food?

Interviewee – I order ^{C3} anything. The most popular ones here around my office is salad.

Because in a metro city like Shanghai where there's 30 million inhabitants, there's

^{C3} basically any food. As long as ^{C6} within two or three kilometers circle, there is something ^{C6} that you can always get into. For example, ^{C6} where our office is, you can get any ^{C3} international food that you want in ^{C1} any price range. It can be very cheap or very ^{C13} expensive. I think that's very common.

Food availability is very, very widespread. That's not only Chinese food, it's ^{C3} any food. It can also be ^{C3} pizza, burgers, chicken wings. It could also be Chinese food or soup. ^{C3 + C11} Basically, whatever you like. ^{C6} It also gives you recommendations based on the time of the day.

^{C6} For example, for the morning, they prioritize breakfast in stores. There's a lot of breakfast ^{C3} providers in the morning that they offer a different set of menus. It's not just bakeries, it's ^{C3} all kinds of sandwiches, coffee, or Chinese breakfast. That's what show in the morning. ^{C3 + C6} During lunch time, they do another set. ^{C3 + C6} Then at dinner time, they do another set. Then ^{C3 + C6} during late nights, they do another set. ^{C6} It's ^{C6} adapting to the time of day to ^{C6} optimize for your needs, basically.

CM – I've heard that people in China, when they try some food or when they order on the website, they would share a review and comments on the food they had. Is it every time?

Interviewee – I think it depends. I think it's ^{C13} common, I also see that. ^{C4} I read it. The first ^{C11 + C4 + C8} thing that I see when I want to order is if recommended by users. When you go to a new restaurant, we also have a Yelp of China. You know Yelp? It's basically Yelp, but China. ^{C6} It's ^{C4} optimized for China. Then basically, you can always see what's the top-rated dishes. ^{C4} That's the one thing that you will look at when you don't know what to order and that's what we order.

Personally, I never rate food because I don't have the time, I cannot be bothered because I'm busy, but I know from ^{C4}the reviews I read, ^{C8}people are doing that. You cannot generalize to say everybody do, because that's not. It may be people do that more often in general than other countries. Because they have this tendency, they're used to sharing their opinion. Also on the retailers, they share much more reviews than Amazon. In Amazon, having 15 reviews, it's already great. In China, they have 100,000 reviews on a hand blender.

That's a very different magnitude because there's so many people. If only 1% of the population like to give comment, it's already a very huge base. I don't think it's generalization, it's really the habit. The habit of sharing our opinion is much more comments. We don't have to really motivate them to do that, they will naturally do that if you offer incentives to convert a user to a reviewer.

CM – Interesting. Before, you talk a little bit about how they optimize the website depending on the time. Are you looking at the design of the app like the colors and so on? Does it matter for you?

Interviewee – No. Because I think they're pretty similar. I don't look at that, the design doesn't matter at all. Because my assumption is, I'd say that digital service space is so crowded in China, you cannot bring something that looks like crap. If the user experience ^{C13}is not good, people will easily drop out, but if you have something great, ^{C13}the adoption rate is very high, so it's very fast. It doesn't matter to me because the baseline is already very good.

Anything that I download now already has a very wide base, so I don't consider design ^{C14}or user experience as a huge-- the benefit is more ^{C3}how fast they deliver, ^{C12}what's the variety, ^{C3}how many stores do they cover, if I found out their ^{C12}quality is better than another channel, these are the things that I consider.

Even price is not so considered because of the competitive landscape. You cannot offer 30% higher price, people will find out. Automatically, the price has been somewhat leveraged in the market. Pricing is very competitive here.

Have you used Uber Eats? I think Uber Eats is not in Switzerland yet. Uber Eats is basically a copy of the one that's already in China. The key differentiator of Uber Eats is every dish has its own image or photo. That's very different from some other apps that exist where you don't see images. ^{C4} If you're not familiar with the food, you can't understand how they will taste like, but on Uber you can have an idea.

^{C4} If you see an image and with the reviews, you already kind of are more ^{C12} reassured that it would ^{C12} taste okay. That's why people get it more often than if you just use wording expression of what's the ingredient because people don't care. You have to show first a picture to generate interest, then show what's in it, then maybe show that this is the top two dishes recommended by our customers. That's how it works here for the takeout delivery.

CM – We've talked a lot about "apps". Does it mean that you always use your mobile to order food and not a computer?

Interviewee – Yes I use the mobile. Only very rarely the computer. For food, most likely, you would never order it on your laptop unless you have a big group of people. I think ^{C13} 80% of the purchase in China or at least the largest proportion of online purchases is done on mobile.

All of the content designs, if you put it that way, needs to see in the mobile format. If something doesn't fit the mobile format, it will not work in China. Because mobile is the first thing people check. Also, when you go to the webpage version, you need to log in through scanning a QR code by your phone, with your phone, and confirm it on your phone to log in. That's the quickest log in way. Everything is connected with mobile.

C14

That's why the purchasing moment is very ad hoc because you can take out your phone
C2 C14 C14
and buy anything anytime. You can also do grocery shopping when you're sitting in a
meeting when people are not looking. It's not tied to your PC.

CM – You said you were shopping during commuting or at the office, right?

Interviewee – Yes, it's most of the time during the day, but not at home in the evening.
In the evening I would maybe do online shopping but more for durable like if I'm just
bored, I can go online and buy some shoes. For groceries the thing is that when you buy
C14
it, you will get it within an hour. If I don't use it, it will become stale. I will not buy fresh
fish from a delivery at 9:00 PM when I'm not eating it. You will order durables, things
more like if I want to buy a cup, I can buy it, but not a fresh fish. Even though I'm eating
some food, I will not order it.

C14

Fresh ingredients and ready-made meals are always ordered right before consumption.
You never order that a day in advance, because you cannot. That's simply not an option.
C14
Most of the cases, you order that to be delivered as soon as possible, or you order it in
the morning at 8:00 AM. For example, when you first get to the office with friends or
C14
buddies. You get it at twelve o'clock, you can get it at any minute. You will not order it in
advance.

CM – Thank you for all of this information, that really helps. I think we're finished, unless
you have something else to add regarding online purchasing of food in China?

Interviewee – I think not for now. But I'm really happy to help and you can contact me if
you need more information. I have to go back to work.

CM – Thank you very much. Have a good evening.

8.6. Transcript of Interview 6

Interviewee	Interviewee6 – Bao ⁶ – Man, 30 years old, Project Manager (education: Master degree in Management), Shanghai
Interviewer	Charlène Max, ZHAW Zurich University of Applied Sciences
Date and length	13 th July 2018, 12:00 (UTC +1), 30 minutes
Technology	WeChat voice call

CM – Merci encore une fois de participer à cette recherche volontairement. Avant de commencer, j'aimerais juste encore préciser que cette interview est faite dans le cadre de ma thèse de master et que c'est anonyme. Je pense que ça va durer maximum 30 minutes. Est-ce que tu as des questions ?

Interviewee – *Rien de particulier.*

CM – Avant de commencer, est-ce que tu es d'accord que j'enregistre l'interview pour pouvoir le retranscrire après ?

Interviewee – *Bien sûr, pas de problème.*

CM – Super. Donc, comme je t'ai dit je fais une recherche sur les achats de nourriture en ligne en Chine. Pour commencer, est-ce que tu peux me dire quelques mots sur comment ça se passe pour toi les courses en ligne ?

Interviewee – *Je vais sur les applications d'e-commerce. Surtout sur les deux plus grosses plateformes TMall et JD. TMall fait partie du groupe Alibaba. JD c'est le deuxième plus grand e-commerce en Chine. J'utilise ces deux plateformes pour toutes mes achats, aussi pour la nourriture. On peut tout acheter sur ces plateformes.*

CM – Pour toi, quelle est la principale raison pour laquelle tu commandes en ligne et pas

⁶ This pseudonym is used to ensure participant's confidentiality

au supermarché ou marché par exemple ?

Interviewee – Pour moi le ^{C14}rythme de vie. ^{C14}Shanghai est super stressant. Je rentre tous les soirs à ^{C14}dix ou onze heures. Ce n'est pas vraiment possible que j'aille au supermarché et je n'ai pas le temps. Donc en résumé par ^{C14}manque de temps principalement. Si je commande depuis l'application je peux le faire ^{C14}quand je veux ^{C2}depuis n'importe où. On va plus ^{C14}dépenser le temps dans le travail ou la vie de couple plutôt que pour aller faire des achats. Aussi, pour la ^{C12}qualité, parce qu'en ligne normalement sur les plateformes que ^{C11}moi je choisis je peux acheter des produits ^{C12}premium donc c'est souvent de ^{C12}bonne qualité. Je peux acheter ^{C11}ce que je veux, je n'ai ^{C14}pas besoin de dépenser de temps pour ^{C2}farfouiller au supermarché, c'est plus facile en ligne.

CM – Tu achètes plutôt des produits étrangers ou chinois ?

Interviewee – ^{C3}Les deux, ^{C3}vraiment les deux. Les deux choses font partie de ma vie quotidienne. J'aime par exemple avoir du vin ou du fromage dans ma vie. J'ai vécu 5 ans à Toulouse, dans le sud de la France. J'aime bien consommer des produits français, ^{C3 + C11 + C14}c'est super important. Et ^{C14}ça je l'achète quotidiennement, comme j'achète des ^{C14}nems aussi tous les jours.

CM – Donc pour toi les achats en ligne c'est pour tout, que ce soit produits frais ou pas, légumes, viandes ?

Interviewee – ^{C3}Oui! Et aussi je voulais dire vu qu'en Chine le e-commerce ^{C13}ça s'est beaucoup développé, quand je fais une commande en ligne je n'ai même ^{C2}pas besoin de me déplacer pour aller chercher mes courses au supermarché et les ramener jusqu'à chez moi, monter les escaliers. Ça va m'être ^{C2}livré devant la porte. Le livreur vient ^{C2}directement jusqu'à la maison. Et il y a aussi souvent des ^{C10}réductions. En ligne c'est quand même ^{C1}moins cher. C'est souvent le cas que les produits soient ^{C1}moins chers et en plus tu as des ^{C10}programmes de fidélité où tu peux ^{C10}accumuler des points et au bout d'un

certain temps ça te donnera des ^{C10}réductions. Tu n'as pas ça au supermarché par exemple. ^{C1 + C10 + C13}

CM – Est-ce que tu vas quand même encore parfois au supermarché ou vraiment plus du tout parce que tu fais l'entier de tes courses avec le mobile ?

*^{C13}
Interviewee – La Chine est un marché spécial. On peut tout faire en ligne. Je peux commander un taxi, payer mes factures d'électricité, d'eau, j'achète des bidons d'eau, je commande une femme de ménage, je paie ma facture de téléphone, je contacte ma banque... tout se fait en ligne. ^{C13}
Avec le téléphone mobile on peut tout faire donc c'est normal que beaucoup plus gens vivent leur quotidien en ligne et font tout avec leur mobile. ^{C13 + C11}
Moi je fais partie de ce groupe de personnes. Mais ce n'est pas exclu d'acheter dans les supermarchés physiques puisque quand je me balade parfois avec ma copine en ville il arrive qu'on fasse des courses. Ça fait partie de notre vie de couple. Alors j'y vais de temps en temps mais sinon c'est vrai que ^{C13 + C14}
j'achète en ligne la plupart du temps, aussi mes habits, chaussures, etc.*

CM – Et quand tu fais tes courses en ligne, à quel moment ça se passe ? A la maison, au travail, durant tes trajets ? La journée, le soir ?

*^{C14}
Interviewee – Il y a de tout. En fait le trajet pour moi ce n'est pas le moment le plus confortable pour commander. Si je suis vraiment un manque de temps et que j'ai ^{C14}
urgemment besoin d'un truc à la maison je vais ^{C2}
le commander pendant mon trajet. Sinon, normalement je prends le temps de ^{C4}
regarder, de ^{C4 + C1}
comparer les prix, soit à la ^{C2}
pause déjeuner ou après le travail.*

CM – Qu'est-ce qui est important sur l'application pour que tu fasses confiance au site et passes une commande ?

Interviewee – Un peu de tout. J'ai beaucoup de critères et il y a beaucoup de raisons

pour lesquelles j'ai choisi ces deux sites. Premièrement, la qualité. Les produits sont
 normalement de bonne qualité. Deuxièmement, la livraison est rapide. En Chine, on
 commande aujourd'hui et ça arrive le lendemain. Même, si je commande le matin ça va
 arriver dans l'après-midi ou même dans moins d'une heure si je le souhaite. C'est vrai
 que sur les grandes plateformes que j'ai cité tout à l'heure c'est rapide et de bonne
 qualité. Parce que sur les plus petits sites parfois si on commande c'est possible que ça
 n'arrive pas à temps ou que quand le produit vient la boîte a cassé ou ce n'est pas
 vraiment ce que tu attendais. Donc la livraison est importante et la qualité doit être bonne.
 Les prix je dirais ce sont plutôt les prix du marché. Comme j'achète des produits premium
 ce n'est pas parmi les moins chers c'est sûr mais au moins c'est moins risqué, au niveau
 de la qualité du produit, du goût.

CM – J'ai entendu dire qu'en Chine les utilisateurs aimaient bien faire des commentaires
 sur ce qu'ils achetaient, poster des photos, donner des notes. Est-ce que tu regardes
 tout ça avant de commander ?

Interviewee – Oui. Oui. C'est une obligation pour moi avant un achat, sauf si c'est un
 produit conseillé par ma copine ou par d'autres gens très proches. Les commentaires ça
 reflète assez bien « l'user expérience ». Vu qu'en Chine l'échelle de population est
 grande, sur chaque produit il y a souvent plus de 10'000 commentaires. Les produits
 sont classés de 1 à 5 étoiles. Donc je peux voir les expériences pas bien, avec 1 étoile,
 et voir pourquoi ce n'est pas bien ce produit-là.

CM – Et on est d'accord toutes les commandes tu les fais depuis ton mobile, pas depuis
 un ordinateur ?

Interviewee – Oui. Ça peut arriver que je fasse depuis un ordinateur parce que parfois
 j'ai l'ordinateur avec moi et comme l'écran est plus grand c'est plus facile pour comparer
 les prix, c'est mieux. Mais en règle générale c'est depuis mon mobile.

CM – J'aurais quelques questions sur le design. C'est important pour toi l'apparence de l'application ?

Interviewee – *Pour moi il n'y a pas de design de site. Ce n'est pas applicable pour moi. Pourquoi ? Parce que si tu veux quand on fait des achats on achète sur TMall ou JD et eux ils ont un template. Chaque fournisseur insère ses données dans le template donc il n'y a pas de différence de design. Donc ça, ça n'a aucune importance.*

CM – Et est-ce que c'est important qu'il y ait beaucoup de photos ?

C4 + C11

Interviewee – *Oui, tout à fait. J'aime voir les produits avant de commander c'est sûr. Je ne commande pas s'il n'y a pas assez de photos toutes façons parce que je ne peux pas voir le produit et du coup je ne veux pas prendre de risque.*

C11

C12

CM – Depuis combien de temps tu es de retour en Chine ?

Interviewee – 5 ans.

CM – Depuis combien de temps tu fais tes achats en ligne pour la nourriture ?

C13

Interviewee – *Depuis que je suis de nouveau là, donc depuis 5 ans.*

CM – Très bien. Est-ce que tu as autre chose à ajouter au sujet des courses en ligne en Chine?

C13

Interviewee – *Ce que je peux dire c'est que c'est un système qui s'est très bien développé, qui fonctionne et qui est très pratique. On est à un stade très avancé. Cela permet de se concentrer sur d'autres choses car quand on peut économiser du temps sur ses courses on peut l'investir ailleurs. Pour moi c'est très souvent dans le travail mais ça peut être aussi dans du temps libre, du temps avec des amis, avec son chéri, du sport. C'est une discussion très intéressante. Je pense que j'ai donné assez d'informations et que c'est plus clair pour toi.*

C13

C2

C13

C14

C14

CM – Oui, ça m’aide beaucoup. Merci beaucoup pour ton temps et ton investissement !

Interviewee – *De rien. Je suis là si tu as d’autres questions.*

9. Appendix 3: In-Vivo Codes, Pattern Codes and Themes

The following pages provide all codes that were found during the analysis of the interviews. The coding cycles comprised two phases, in-vivo coding and pattern coding (that is to say the online shopping motivations explained in the research framework). Furthermore, all patterns categories were grouped into themes, utilitarian or hedonic motivations.

Interview ID	Coding Cycles		Theme
	1) In Vivo	2) Pattern	
1	cheap price	1 Cost Saving	Utilitarian Motivation
1	cheaper prices	1 Cost Saving	
2	reasonable price	1 Cost Saving	
2	cheaper	1 Cost Saving	
2	don't want to spend too much	1 Cost Saving	
2	wider range of price	1 Cost Saving	
2	that really charge a lot	1 Cost Saving	
2	nearly nothing	1 Cost Saving	
2	price of the delivery	1 Cost Saving	
2	cheaper	1 Cost Saving	
3	very cheap	1 Cost Saving	
3	very low	1 Cost Saving	
3	affordable	1 Cost Saving	
4	they take in charge the delivery charges	1 Cost Saving	
4	not that expensive	1 Cost Saving	
4	price	1 Cost Saving	
4	exactly	1 Cost Saving	
4	the most important things	1 Cost Saving	
4	cheap	1 Cost Saving	
5	cheap	1 Cost Saving	
5	don't order very expensive food	1 Cost Saving	
5	any price range	1 Cost Saving	
6	moins cher	1 Cost Saving	
6	moins chers	1 Cost Saving	
6	n'a pas ça au supermarché	1 Cost Saving	
6	comparer les prix	1 Cost Saving	
6	prix du marché	1 Cost Saving	
6	comparer les prix	1 Cost Saving	
1	convenient	2 Convenience	Utilitarian Motivation
1	you don't need to go outside anymore to buy food	2 Convenience	

1	convenient	2	Convenience
1	convenient	2	Convenience
1	convenient	2	Convenience
1	delivery is convenient	2	Convenience
1	don't need to carry very heavy bags	2	Convenience
1	delivered at your place or at your office	2	Convenience
1	directly at your door	2	Convenience
1	must be easy to find the products	2	Convenience
1	you don't want to search too long	2	Convenience
1	if it's too complicated I prefer to leave it and use another one	2	Convenience
1	simple	2	Convenience
1	easy	2	Convenience
1	convenient	2	Convenience
1	anytime	2	Convenience
1	at home	2	Convenience
1	at my office	2	Convenience
1	on my way home	2	Convenience
1	on the bus	2	Convenience
1	in the metro	2	Convenience
1	everywhere	2	Convenience
1	convenient	2	Convenience
1	depends what I am doing and what I want to have at this moment	2	Convenience
1	when I need it	2	Convenience
1	convenient	2	Convenience
2	convenient	2	Convenience
2	too lazy	2	Convenience
2	very convenient	2	Convenience
2	you don't need to go outside it's just convenient	2	Convenience
2	just too convenient for not using it	2	Convenience
2	have food delivered and eat together is convenient	2	Convenience
2	convenient	2	Convenience
2	don't need to go in the city	2	Convenience
2	carry your stuff	2	Convenience
2	deliver it at your place	2	Convenience
2	can have it delivered at work	2	Convenience
2	convenient	2	Convenience
2	don't need to go to the market	2	Convenience
2	everywhere	2	Convenience

2	in the bus	2 Convenience
2	in the morning	2 Convenience
2	at home	2 Convenience
2	in a store	2 Convenience
2	then you just do it	2 Convenience
2	convenient to pay	2 Convenience
2	convenient	2 Convenience
2	easily	2 Convenience
2	convenient	2 Convenience
3	convenient	2 Convenience
3	directly to your place	2 Convenience
3	easy	2 Convenience
3	convenient	2 Convenience
3	I don't need to go outside	2 Convenience
3	you can work or do your stuff at home and don't need to worry about going out to supermarket so I order meal	2 Convenience
3	convenient	2 Convenience
3	easy to use	2 Convenience
3	convenient	2 Convenience
3	convenient	2 Convenience
3	I don't want to think "where is the button", "where is the food"	2 Convenience
3	very convenient	2 Convenience
4	convenient	2 Convenience
4	convenience	2 Convenience
4	why should I still go to supermarket if I can order everything and have it delivered at my place	2 Convenience
4	not so convenient as in China	2 Convenience
4	at the moment	2 Convenience
4	if I see that I need something to cook I will order it right at that moment	2 Convenience
4	you don't have to think about that in advance	2 Convenience
4	we don't have to think about it in advance	2 Convenience
4	convenient	2 Convenience
4	whether at work or for home	2 Convenience
4	convenient	2 Convenience
4	convenient	2 Convenience
4	you order meal, you're not going to take food from home with you	2 Convenience
4	much easier to just order food	2 Convenience

5	convenience	2 Convenience	
5	convenience	2 Convenience	
5	no other reason	2 Convenience	
5	more convenient	2 Convenience	
5	when they're commuting or before they get off work	2 Convenience	
5	convenient	2 Convenience	
5	delivered	2 Convenience	
5	pick up what I bought	2 Convenience	
5	not needed for me to visit the store	2 Convenience	
5	when the weather gets really hot	2 Convenience	
5	convenient	2 Convenience	
5	weather's too hot	2 Convenience	
5	very easily	2 Convenience	
5	buy anything	2 Convenience	
6	depuis n'importe où	2 Convenience	
6	plus facile	2 Convenience	
6	pas besoin de me déplacer	2 Convenience	
6	livré devant la porte	2 Convenience	
6	directement jusqu'à la maison	2 Convenience	
6	le commander pendant mon trajet	2 Convenience	
6	pause déjeuner ou après le travail	2 Convenience	
6	très pratique	2 Convenience	
1	buy a lot of things	3 Selection	Utilitarian Motivation
1	a lot of shops	3 Selection	
1	you can buy anything	3 Selection	
1	everything you need	3 Selection	
1	you can find anything	3 Selection	
1	everything you want	3 Selection	
1	I would buy it from foreign brands	3 Selection	
1	for the things Western countries are good at, then I would buy that	3 Selection	
1	you can search	3 Selection	
2	lot of choice	3 Selection	
2	not limited to the actual stores	3 Selection	
2	the snacks or desserts or like salads of course Western brands	3 Selection	
2	sometimes I order many things from different places	3 Selection	
2	choice	3 Selection	
3	Western food and Japanese food	3 Selection	
3	have a lot of choice	3 Selection	

4	absolutely	3	Selection	Utilitarian Motivation
4	yes	3	Selection	
4	essentially	3	Selection	
4	a lot more varieties	3	Selection	
4	a lot of services, products and also food delivery service	3	Selection	
4	they have to catch up	3	Selection	
4	more of Western restaurants	3	Selection	
4	Western food	3	Selection	
4	Japanese restaurants	3	Selection	
4	selection	3	Selection	
4	Japanese food there	3	Selection	
4	whatever food	3	Selection	
4	sometimes Chinese food, sometimes Western	3	Selection	
5	more and more options	3	Selection	
5	different vendors	3	Selection	
5	anything	3	Selection	
5	fruit and vegetables, seafood, frozen meat, fresh meat	3	Selection	
5	everything	3	Selection	
5	your area doesn't have so many options	3	Selection	
5	pastas or rice combos	3	Selection	
5	anything	3	Selection	
5	any food	3	Selection	
5	international	3	Selection	
5	any food	3	Selection	
5	pizza, burgers, chicken wings, it could also be Chinese food or soup	3	Selection	
5	whatever you like	3	Selection	
5	different set of menus	3	Selection	
5	all kinds of sandwiches, coffe, or Chinese breakfast	3	Selection	
5	they do another set	3	Selection	
5	they do another set	3	Selection	
5	they do another set	3	Selection	
5	variety	3	Selection	
5	how many stores do they cover	3	Selection	
6	ça je l'achète quotidiennement	3	Selection	
6	oui	3	Selection	
1	look there and find ideas	4	Information Availability	Utilitarian Motivation
1	I will look for it	4	Information Availability	
1	look at the comments	4	Information Availability	

1	you can see whether it was good or not	4	Information Availability
1	see if it's your taste or note	4	Information Availability
1	if it's cooked as you like	4	Information Availability
1	you can search	4	Information Availability
2	what is important I think is the rating	4	Information Availability
2	see if it's good food, popular food	4	Information Availability
2	you look for the food	4	Information Availability
2	look for the food that are on sale	4	Information Availability
2	how you can find the food you like	4	Information Availability
2	you can see how it is	4	Information Availability
2	whether it's like your expectations	4	Information Availability
2	is it for your taste	4	Information Availability
2	check what they say	4	Information Availability
3	able to filter	4	Information Availability
4	you can see the comments of the other consumers	4	Information Availability
4	easier to see if it's good quality food or not	4	Information Availability
4	look at a review of a product	4	Information Availability
4	want to see if there were a problem with the food or the delivery	4	Information Availability
4	high-quality pictures	4	Information Availability
4	reviews	4	Information Availability
4	exactly	4	Information Availability
4	the most important things	4	Information Availability
5	I read it	4	Information Availability
5	when I want to order is if recommended by users	4	Information Availability
5	you can always see	4	Information Availability
5	you will look at	4	Information Availability
5	the reviews I read	4	Information Availability
5	if you're not familiar with the food, you can't understand how they will taste like, but on Uber you can have an idea	4	Information Availability
5	if you see an image and with the reviews	4	Information Availability
6	regarder	4	Information Availability
6	comparer les prix	4	Information Availability
6	oui	4	Information Availability
6	oui	4	Information Availability
6	obligation pour moi avant un achat	4	Information Availability
6	je peux voir les expériences pas bien	4	Information Availability

6	voir pourquoi ce n'est pas bien ce produit-là	4 Information Availability	
6	j'aime voir les produits avant de commander c'est sûr	4 Information Availability	
4	it really depends on where I am	6 Customized Products / Services	Utilitarian Motivation
4	it depends on the place you live	6 Customized Products / Services	
4	the app will adapt itself depending on the location	6 Customized Products / Services	
4	more of Western restaurants	6 Customized Products / Services	
4	depend on your area	6 Customized Products / Services	
4	regarding the offers	6 Customized Products / Services	
4	in the same area than where you are	6 Customized Products / Services	
4	programmed	6 Customized Products / Services	
5	limit the areas	6 Customized Products / Services	
5	within two or three kilometers circle, there is something that you can always get into	6 Customized Products / Services	
5	where your office is	6 Customized Products / Services	
5	recommendations based on the time of the day	6 Customized Products / Services	
5	for the morning, they prioritize breakfast	6 Customized Products / Services	
5	they do another set	6 Customized Products / Services	
5	they do another set	6 Customized Products / Services	
5	they do another set	6 Customized Products / Services	
5	adapting to the time of day	6 Customized Products / Services	
5	optimize for your needs	6 Customized Products / Services	
5	optimized	6 Customized Products / Services	
2	nice	7 Adventure / Exploration	Hedonic Motivation
2	cozy	7 Adventure / Exploration	
2	nice	7 Adventure / Exploration	
3	I just discover good things by myself	7 Adventure / Exploration	
1	some customers they write comment	8 Social	Hedonic Motivation
1	look at the comments	8 Social	
1	pictures	8 Social	
1	what the customers say	8 Social	
2	with your roommates	8 Social	
2	have food delivered and eat together is convenient	8 Social	
2	what is important I think is the rating	8 Social	
2	a lot of ratings from the users	8 Social	
2	pictures with every comment	8 Social	
2	makes a comment on food	8 Social	

2	users post the picture with the comment automatically	8 Social	
2	a lot of users saying something then you believe them	8 Social	
2	their comments have a lot of power	8 Social	
2	we comment it and want to help others	8 Social	
2	good food we want to share it	8 Social	
2	if it's not good we also want to say it so that others don't buy it	8 Social	
4	you can see the comments of the other consumers	8 Social	
4	incentives for people to review	8 Social	
4	put pictures	8 Social	
4	reviews	8 Social	
4	exactly	8 Social	
4	the most important things	8 Social	
5	when I want to order is if recommended by users	8 Social	
5	people are doing that	8 Social	
6	commentaires	8 Social	
6	user experience	8 Social	
1	new thing	9 Idea	Hedonic Motivation
1	new things	9 Idea	
1	look there and find ideas	9 Idea	
2	get a discount	10 Value	Hedonic Motivation
2	discount	10 Value	
2	real stores, they give you no discount	10 Value	
2	look for the food that are on sale	10 Value	
4	discounts	10 Value	
4	collect points	10 Value	
4	little discounts	10 Value	
4	memberships	10 Value	
4	that's not something you're going to get at markets	10 Value	
4	get bonus points	10 Value	
4	go back into whatever you purchase	10 Value	
5	better promotions	10 Value	
6	réduction	10 Value	
6	programmes de fidélité	10 Value	
6	accumuler des points	10 Value	
6	réductions	10 Value	
6	n'a pas ça au supermarché	10 Value	
1	you can choose	11 Authority / Status	

1	place your order and then choose	11	Authority / Status	Hedonic Motivation
1	I buy food on very limited websites	11	Authority / Status	
1	I buy the food there	11	Authority / Status	
1	I will try several times	11	Authority / Status	
1	I have to try to know if it is good	11	Authority / Status	
1	I will just try	11	Authority / Status	
1	in the end, I will decide if I like it or not	11	Authority / Status	
1	if I don't feel like ordering I would change the website	11	Authority / Status	
1	I will choose or not	11	Authority / Status	
1	I like to feel comfortable when I use a website	11	Authority / Status	
1	you want to see	11	Authority / Status	
1	see if it's your taste or note	11	Authority / Status	
1	if it's cooked as you like	11	Authority / Status	
1	when I need it	11	Authority / Status	
2	whenever you want	11	Authority / Status	
2	if you order in the morning you expect to be delivered in the evening	11	Authority / Status	
2	how you can find the food you like	11	Authority / Status	
2	you have the product you want	11	Authority / Status	
2	whether it's like your expectations	11	Authority / Status	
2	is it for your taste	11	Authority / Status	
2	I would give it a try	11	Authority / Status	
2	doesn't really depend on friends	11	Authority / Status	
3	I only use this	11	Authority / Status	
3	I just discover good things by myself	11	Authority / Status	
4	it really depends on where I am	11	Authority / Status	
4	I want to eat	11	Authority / Status	
4	want to see if there were a problem with the food or the delivery	11	Authority / Status	
4	as soon as I can find what I want	11	Authority / Status	
4	if I see that I need something to cook I will order it right at that moment	11	Authority / Status	
4	suits to the lifestyle of people here	11	Authority / Status	
5	pick up what I bought	11	Authority / Status	
5	I go for that one that I know is faster	11	Authority / Status	
5	you don't want to go outside	11	Authority / Status	
5	whatever you like	11	Authority / Status	

5	when I want to order is if recommended by users	11 Authority / Status	
6	j'utilise ces deux plateformes pour tous mes achats, aussi pour la nourriture	11 Authority / Status	
6	moi je choisis	11 Authority / Status	
6	ce que je veux	11 Authority / Status	
6	ça je l'achète quotidiennement	11 Authority / Status	
6	moi je fais partie de ce groupe de personnes	11 Authority / Status	
6	j'ai choisi	11 Authority / Status	
6	je le souhaite	11 Authority / Status	
6	j'aime voir les produits avant de commander c'est sûr	11 Authority / Status	
6	je ne commande pas s'il n'y a pas assez de photos toutes façons	11 Authority / Status	
6	je ne veux pas	11 Authority / Status	
1	very reliable websites	12 Security	Utilitarian Motivation
1	good brand	12 Security	
1	brands I know	12 Security	
1	I trust these ones	12 Security	
1	I have to try to know if it is good	12 Security	
1	according to what I know about the website or not	12 Security	
1	you can find the best quality	12 Security	
1	you are worried about the quality	12 Security	
1	you are worried about the products, about the quality	12 Security	
1	you have to eat it	12 Security	
1	you have to eat it it's for your health	12 Security	
1	you have to be very careful	12 Security	
1	brands that I know	12 Security	
1	I know they are good	12 Security	
1	it's safer	12 Security	
2	visibility for whether the food is ok	12 Security	
2	you don't want to order meals that are already prepared because they contain too much sugar or addictive, you know, you can order just grocery	12 Security	
2	how it looks like	12 Security	
2	serious	12 Security	
2	popular	12 Security	
2	tricky	12 Security	
2	to know if food is good or not	12 Security	

2	that's why we started to always comment and so	12	Security	Hedonic Motivation
2	we don't always trust the companies	12	Security	
2	we comment it and want to help others	12	Security	
2	good food we want to share it	12	Security	
2	if it's not good we also want to say it so that others don't buy it	12	Security	
3	the best	12	Security	
3	heavy diet	12	Security	
3	prefer food that is healthy	12	Security	
3	don't hurt my stomach	12	Security	
3	fresh	12	Security	
3	healthy	12	Security	
3	good	12	Security	
3	healthy	12	Security	
3	sometimes the pictures are fake	12	Security	
4	be careful what you buy	12	Security	
4	easier to see if it's good quality food or not	12	Security	
4	want to be sure there are positive reviews	12	Security	
5	quality	12	Security	
5	reassured	12	Security	
5	taste okay	12	Security	
6	qualité	12	Security	
6	premium	12	Security	
6	bonne qualité	12	Security	
6	qualité	12	Security	
6	bonne qualité	12	Security	
6	bonne qualité	12	Security	
6	qualité doit être bonne	12	Security	
6	premium	12	Security	
6	moins risqué	12	Security	
6	qualité du produit	12	Security	
6	goût	12	Security	
6	je peux voir les expériences pas bien	12	Security	
6	voir pourquoi ce n'est pas bien ce produit-là	12	Security	
6	risque	12	Security	
1	for a lot of years	13	Lifestyle	Hedonic Motivation
1	experience	13	Lifestyle	
1	I know	13	Lifestyle	
1	11 years ago	13	Lifestyle	

1	already done this for a lot of years	13 Lifestyle
1	I don't know how I would do without my smartphone	13 Lifestyle
2	common	13 Lifestyle
2	just too convenient for not using it	13 Lifestyle
2	of course mobile! I don't think there is anyone ordering from computer	13 Lifestyle
3	only mobile	13 Lifestyle
3	it's been like 4 years	13 Lifestyle
4	they do not do it anymore	13 Lifestyle
4	100% with mobile	13 Lifestyle
4	why should I still go to supermarket if I can order everything and have it delivered at my place	13 Lifestyle
4	not so convenient as in China	13 Lifestyle
4	I have the apps on my smartphone	13 Lifestyle
4	2 months as well, and already before I left	13 Lifestyle
4	everyone does it	13 Lifestyle
4	why wouldn't you do it	13 Lifestyle
4	suits to the lifestyle of people here	13 Lifestyle
4	kind of Shanghai, Beijing, Shenzen lifestyles	13 Lifestyle
4	adoption rate has been really crazy	13 Lifestyle
5	I quickly adapted to the rhythm here	13 Lifestyle
5	I'm not going there anymore	13 Lifestyle
5	basic logic	13 Lifestyle
5	once a day	13 Lifestyle
5	very often	13 Lifestyle
5	every single restaurant in the whole country can deliver	13 Lifestyle
5	if there's one restaurant that doesn't deliver, it's seen as a very weird behavior	13 Lifestyle
5	normal consumption model	13 Lifestyle
5	it didn't take a while until I got used to everything	13 Lifestyle
5	once you get used to the system, it's very easy to stick into the system	13 Lifestyle
5	common	13 Lifestyle
5	common	13 Lifestyle

5	the adoption rate is very high, so it's very fast. It doesn't matter to me because the baseline is already very good.	13 Lifestyle	
5	80% of the purchase in China or at least the largest proportion of online purchases is done on mobile	13 Lifestyle	
6	les deux plus grosses plateformes	13 Lifestyle	
6	j'utilise ces deux plateformes pour tous mes achats, aussi pour la nourriture	13 Lifestyle	
6	on peut tout acheter sur ces plateformes	13 Lifestyle	
6	les deux	13 Lifestyle	
6	vraiment les deux	13 Lifestyle	
6	beaucoup développé	13 Lifestyle	
6	n'a pas ça au supermarché	13 Lifestyle	
6	on peut tout faire en ligne	13 Lifestyle	
6	avec le téléphone mobile on peut tout faire	13 Lifestyle	
6	moi je fais partie de ce groupe de personnes	13 Lifestyle	
6	j'achète en ligne la plupart du temps	13 Lifestyle	
6	oui	13 Lifestyle	
6	mobile	13 Lifestyle	
6	depuis 5 ans	13 Lifestyle	
6	très bien développé	13 Lifestyle	
6	fonctionne	13 Lifestyle	
6	stade très avancé	13 Lifestyle	
1	doesn't take a lot of time	14 Time Saving	Utilitarian Motivation
1	efficient	14 Time Saving	
1	at any time	14 Time Saving	
1	you don't want to search too long	14 Time Saving	
1	depends what I am doing and what I want to have at this moment	14 Time Saving	
2	you can stay in your dorm room, you can organize delivered food	14 Time Saving	
2	when the workload is too much	14 Time Saving	
2	we don't have so much time	14 Time Saving	
2	fast	14 Time Saving	
2	they order in the morning and they know that in the evening when they come home they will receive the food	14 Time Saving	
2	before they go to work	14 Time Saving	
2	whenever you want	14 Time Saving	
2	that's why	14 Time Saving	

2	very quick	14	Time Saving
2	if you order in the morning you expect to be delivered in the evening	14	Time Saving
2	when you order something you need it now	14	Time Saving
2	order a little bit before	14	Time Saving
3	after 30 or 35 minutes the food will be delivered	14	Time Saving
3	I can save time	14	Time Saving
3	quicker	14	Time Saving
3	you can work or do your stuff at home and don't need to worry about going out to supermarket	14	Time Saving
3	quick	14	Time Saving
4	may never reach the supermarket within the open hours	14	Time Saving
4	it will be late, and they may want to go at home	14	Time Saving
4	between 1 hour and 15 minutes to 30 minutes	14	Time Saving
4	pretty quickly	14	Time Saving
4	give you the estimates of when	14	Time Saving
4	don't go above like 1 hour and 30 minutes	14	Time Saving
4	delivered quite quickly	14	Time Saving
4	never be very long	14	Time Saving
4	very quick with the delivery times	14	Time Saving
4	order quickly	14	Time Saving
4	quick to be delivered	14	Time Saving
4	1 hour in advance	14	Time Saving
4	here it's only some hours	14	Time Saving
5	work longer hours, then the commute is longer	14	Time Saving
5	if I still have to do grocery shopping during the day, it would be 10:00 before I can finish having dinner	14	Time Saving
5	by the time they get home, they will have it delivered	14	Time Saving
5	delivery service is so fast	14	Time Saving
5	within two hours	14	Time Saving
5	within an hour	14	Time Saving
5	maximum, under two hours	14	Time Saving
5	can be with you in 30 minutes	14	Time Saving
5	I just order it online, in 30 minutes, it's at my door	14	Time Saving
5	last-minute delivery	14	Time Saving

5	I go for that one that I know is faster	14	Time Saving
5	fast	14	Time Saving
5	within 1 hour	14	Time Saving
5	how fast they deliver	14	Time Saving
5	purchasing moment is very ad hoc	14	Time Saving
5	anytime	14	Time Saving
5	when you're sitting in a meeting	14	Time Saving
5	you will get it within an hour	14	Time Saving
5	ordered right before consumption	14	Time Saving
5	be delivered as soon as possible	14	Time Saving
5	at any minute	14	Time Saving
6	rythme de vie	14	Time Saving
6	Shanghai est super stressant	14	Time Saving
6	dix ou onze heures	14	Time Saving
6	je n'ai pas le temps	14	Time Saving
6	manque de temps	14	Time Saving
6	quand je veux	14	Time Saving
6	dépenser le temps dans le travail ou la vie de couple plutôt que pour aller faire des achats	14	Time Saving
6	pas besoin de dépenser de temps	14	Time Saving
6	ça je l'achète quotidiennement	14	Time Saving
6	nems aussi tous les jours	14	Time Saving
6	j'achète en ligne la plupart du temps	14	Time Saving
6	de tout	14	Time Saving
6	urgement	14	Time Saving
6	rapide	14	Time Saving
6	commande aujourd'hui et ça arrive le lendemain	14	Time Saving
6	si je commande le matin ça va arriver dans l'après-midi	14	Time Saving
6	moins d'une heure	14	Time Saving
6	rapide	14	Time Saving
6	la livraison est importante	14	Time Saving
6	de se concentrer sur d'autres choses	14	Time Saving
6	économiser du temps sur ses courses on peut l'investir ailleurs	14	Time Saving

10. Appendix 4: Individuals' Experiences and Codes

Interview 1		Interview 2	
Code	Total	Code	Total
2 Convenience	26	2 Convenience	23
11 Authority / Status	15	8 Social	12
12 Security	15	12 Security	12
3 Selection	9	14 Time Saving	12
4 Information Availability	7	4 Information Availability	9
13 Lifestyle	6	1 Cost Saving	8
14 Time Saving	5	11 Authority / Status	8
8 Social	4	3 Selection	5
9 Idea	3	10 Value	4
1 Cost Saving	2	7 Adventure / Exploration	3
5 Lack of Sociality	0	13 Lifestyle	3
6 Customized Products / Services	0	5 Lack of Sociality	0
7 Adventure / Exploration	0	6 Customized Products / Services	0
10 Value	0	9 Idea	0
Total	92	Total	99

Interview 3		Interview 4	
Code	Total	Code	Total
2 Convenience	13	2 Convenience	14
12 Security	9	3 Selection	13
14 Time Saving	5	14 Time Saving	13
1 Cost Saving	3	13 Lifestyle	11
3 Selection	2	4 Information Availability	8
11 Authority / Status	2	6 Customized Products / Services	8
13 Lifestyle	2	10 Value	7
4 Information Availability	1	1 Cost Saving	6
7 Adventure / Exploration	1	8 Social	6
5 Lack of Sociality	0	11 Authority / Status	6
6 Customized Products / Services	0	12 Security	3
8 Social	0	5 Lack of Sociality	0
9 Idea	0	7 Adventure / Exploration	0
10 Value	0	9 Idea	0
Total	38	Total	95

Interview 5		Interview 6	
Code	Total	Code	Total
14 Time Saving	21	14 Time Saving	21
3 Selection	20	13 Lifestyle	15
2 Convenience	14	12 Security	14
13 Lifestyle	14	11 Authority / Status	10
6 Customized Products / Services	11	2 Convenience	8
4 Information Availability	7	4 Information Availability	8
11 Authority / Status	5	1 Cost Saving	6
1 Cost Saving	3	10 Value	5
12 Security	3	3 Selection	4
8 Social	2	8 Social	2
10 Value	1	5 Lack of Sociality	0
5 Lack of Sociality	0	6 Customized Products / Services	0
7 Adventure / Exploration	0	7 Adventure / Exploration	0
9 Idea	0	9 Idea	0
Total	101	Total	93